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**THE ARCHITECTURAL CORRESPONDENCE OF SPACE AND SPEECH IN
TRAGEDY**

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Ph. D

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ABSTRACT

The main motive for undertaking this thesis was the exploration of the special relation between space and word, a relation which has recently concerned architectural theory from various aspects. However it was for us important to explore this relation inside the framework of a special system, a system which allows the production of 'real' three dimensional space; drama. Our choice to deal with classical drama was based in its attribute of producing organised space in co-existence and interdependence with articulated speech. It was for us significant that we are not dealing with an internal imaginary space but with a space which is generated and materialised during performance on stage. This thesis's claim that its analysis takes its bearings from aspects of architectural theory requires clarification since it may set up in the mind of a reader from classical studies that the object of the thesis is purely architectural or relates to the physical fabric of the theatre. This is emphatically not the case. The aspect of architectural theory which we are concerned with, concerns the evolution of the analysis of space and spatial relationships. This type of analysis, which gradually achieved an almost autonomous field by the end of the twentieth century, is one which is not so much concerned with the physical or geometrical relations of space but of the experience of space as it is synthesised in the subject.

In the first of our chapters we deal with those different readings attempting a critical presentation of the existing scholarship. Obviously it is the performance and all the conventions which govern it that fully define the space of drama. It is the 'event' (of architectural theories) - as this is realised through the characters of drama that make space exist. That space cannot be equated or reduced to the space of the theatre building. It was through this perspective that in the second chapter of our thesis we were concerned to identify the role and action of the main 'subjects' (or the main participants, as we use to call them) of drama. Thus it was necessary to investigate the role of the poet, the actor and the audience, not so much in order to understand how they experience theatrical space, but in reverse, in order to explore the way they influence the production of theatrical space.

In order to understand performance, we need to confront the issues of representation in antiquity through the notion of *mimesis* and the possible application of the term *eidolon* to the theatrical space. One further target is then to reveal the importance of theatrical space as an innovative genre of space- the first representational space - the analysis of which could contribute to the understanding of the different notions of space in antiquity, especially the Platonic *Khora*. Those issues are confronted in the third chapter of this thesis where we argue that what we call the 'space in drama' depends upon a combination of different types of representations; representations that their referents can not be identified as they belong to the domain of myth. Thus our positive reason for using the resources of Greek philosophy to render the mechanisms of dramatic representation intelligible rests upon our wish to find material which would validate the proposition that these mechanisms were thinkable.

Clearly a central question in the investigation of theatrical space in terms of the arguments put forward above is the relationship between space and language. In the fourth and last of our chapters we attempt to investigate the nature of what we call dramatic speech and its ability to create three- dimensional space on stage, in any of its forms (dialogue, monologue, direct, indirect). Recent theories of architecture have been preoccupied with the exploration of the interrelation of architecture with different disciplines mainly with language itself. The relation of architecture with language becomes more complex in two main ways which concisely refer on the one hand to the influence the analysis of the structure of language has on the development of architectural discourse and on the other, to the influence architectural discourse has on architectural practice. We see then that recent architecture criticism is not limited to the reading of buildings and the marking off of historical periods, but contributes to the development of architecture practice itself.

The investigation of theatrical space's relation with word would have never been complete without the study of certain examples from the trilogy *Oresteia*. Those examples, dealt with in the last part of the fourth chapter gave us the opportunity to validate our approach and enrich our conclusions concerning the issues which this thesis intended to clarify

Ariadne Vozani

'The word is the image [eikon] of action'

Simonides

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INTRODUCTION

The motive for undertaking this thesis was the exploration of the special relation between space and words, a relation which has recently concerned architectural theory from various aspects. However it was important for us to explore this relation inside the framework of a special system, a system which allows the production of a three-dimensional space; drama. Our choice of classical drama was based on its capacity to produce organised space in co-existence and interdependence with articulated speech. It was for us significant that we are not dealing with an internal imaginary space but with a space which is generated and materialised during performance on stage.

There are, of course, many histories of drama and many histories of classical Greek drama. In the first of our chapters we deal with these attempting a critical presentation of the existing scholarship. Even if we may be thought to adopt a rather negative attitude towards much of the existing scholarship, we would like to note that there is nothing in our criticism which overlooks the profound contribution to the study of Greek drama which exists within contemporary classical scholarship. Indeed this thesis is completely dependent upon that scholarship. Our attitude stems straightforwardly from the fact that this literature does not necessarily help and can sometimes be an obstacle to the analysis of the specific object of our enquiry. We understand that to justify these criticisms we will have to justify the object of our enquiry as being significant but overlooked. Classical scholarship, philology, textual and literary criticism, theatre history, drama studies - all these scholarly fields have contributed to the history of drama. Yet anyone who absorbs himself in the literature

soon meets an important paradox; that the topic always seems to be fragmented. The theatre building, the stage, the performance, the text, the scenery, all these and more are written about, yet written about in terms of the elements of drama. What is much more rare is a clear conception of what we may call drama as such. By this we mean the discourse which unites all these elements into a single system of conventions. It is with these conventions as a whole that we are concerned in this thesis, especially from a consideration of their overall articulation and interaction. It is our conviction that the concentration upon analysis, element by element, even though it produces essential historical material, still leaves unspecified the essential nature of dramatic discourse itself. To borrow a distinction from the linguist Saussure, the real object of the thesis is to construct a '*synchronic*' account of those dramatic conventions as a whole. Saussure distinguishes this from a *diachronic* or purely historical account of the history of each element, so that the *synchronic* is an analysis of a system as a whole¹. Of course, the rules and conventions of drama change over time and the materials produced by specialised forms of historical research are indispensable. But to understand the dynamics of the dramatic discourse at any one moment one must reconstruct a synchronic account for that particular historical moment. Or to use an architectural metaphor, one must take a cross-section of all the elements in order to understand their interconnection. We hope in this thesis that by adopting this viewpoint we may be able to reformulate certain aspects of the nature of classical Greek tragedy and clarify the special relation between space and word.

This introduction presents both the opportunity but also the obligation to clarify the

¹ Saussure's distinction should not be taken as an indication that we propose a semiological analysis, it is simply to follow the distinction that he makes in respect to how one may write about chess. One could write a history of the board, of each of the pieces, of the variations in chess between cultures, etc. But only by giving a synchronic account (of chess at any

nature of our particular investigation and its subject. Initially this relates to the question as to why this thesis is registered as a contribution to architectural theory. This thesis's claim that its analysis takes its bearings from aspects of architectural theory requires clarification since it may set up in the mind of a reader from classical studies that the object of the thesis is conventionally architectural or relates to the physical fabric of the theatre. This is emphatically not the case. The aspect of architectural theory which we are concerned with concerns the evolution of the analysis of space and spatial relationships rather than of buildings. This type of analysis, which gradually achieved near autonomy by the end of the twentieth century, is one which is not so much concerned with the physical or geometrical relations of space but of the experience of space as it is synthesised in the subject. On this point we should note that the use of the notion of experience in architectural theory does not imply (or should not imply) a personal or individual interpretation of space.² Within these terms since Kant, architectural theory has developed a subjective theory of space which, although it is not always acknowledged, is ultimately dependent on Kant's arguments. The subject then becomes an element of the

historical moment) would one understand not only the rules but how it was played.

² This question is frequently confused especially in the contemporary circumstances where the term 'subjective' is often thought to be synonymous with the personal, the individual, the psychological and even sometimes with the unconsidered. It is important to realize that within and since Kant's *Aesthetics*, the disinterested subject is precisely the opposite of the personal. In Kant's terms, in order to achieve an aesthetic response to an object as opposed to a personal or what he calls an appetitive relation to the object, the subject must empty out of his response all that is purely personal, all that differentiates one individual from another. The 'subject' of aesthetics brings to bear nothing but a stripped humanity. It is, of course, for this reason that Kant is able to argue at one and the same time, that aesthetic judgment is both subjective and universal. See also the article of Donougho M., *Spaced out or folded in? Trends in architectural choreography*, in *'Philosophy and architecture'*, ed. By Michael Mitias, p.166, where he argues that 'A central category in the work of W. Benjamin is 'experience', which he sought to remove from the abstraction of neo-Kantian or phenomenological projects (...) Benjamin writes: buildings are appropriated in a twofold manner: by use and by perception - or rather by touch and sight...' Not that architecture simply reduces to social function. Instead, its reception takes place tacitly, via habit, rather than attention, and collectively rather than through some individual apprehension or synthesis.'

architectural theory, since the architecture and its form cannot be intelligible in terms of its effects independently of its synthesis within the subject. We will argue that the rules and conventions which govern the subject in a particular space become, as it were, part of the analysis of that space. To make an analysis of the space of a judicial court, for example, it is not a question simply of indicating the physical relation between the judge's bench, the position of the accused, the witness's stand and the seats of the jury. Nor even is it a question of entailing the conventions of the courtroom. The analysis of space would include the events and the discourse of the courtroom as part of the articulation of space. The importance of the 'subject' in architectural theory returns through the meaning of its importance for the designation of space. It has been recently discussed whether architectural space defines the action of its 'inhabitants' as we traditionally used to think or it is defined by them.

Contemporary architects argue that it is not only the physical relations of a building that determine its character, but it is more the different 'events' that take place inside it, as performed by the 'characters' who come to inhabit it.³ Specifically, this involves showing how space materialises and manifests the conventions which govern the court in our former example. Even when we deal in the court with something apparently linguistic '*the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth*', we must see how this apparently clear statement functions as a complex set of conventions which govern what can and what cannot be represented in the court. Put in a logical way, this is because the very logic of truth is only defined by the sense of the courtroom. For example, it excludes discourse which falls under the legal exclusion of

³ *Architecture is as much about the event that takes place in a space as about the space itself.* See, TSCHUMI B., *Event Architecture*, in *Architecture in transition, Between Deconstruction and New Modernism*. In this thesis we will argue that a) The conventions of an institution, as for example a court, determine and are determined by the spatial relations, b) The spatial relations are interdependent with the events that inhabit any space we refer to, architectural, theatrical, etc.

hearsay evidence. The spatial analysis of the courtroom, and of the conventions governing who can say what and when, must include an account of the construction of those who can speak and act within the court. This is necessary not so much to understand a trial which is conducted within these conventions but to understand the conditions of legal and judicial representability as such. Now doubtless no one discipline has a monopoly over the description of the scene. Often they are conceived as rules, but it is our contention that the analysis of rules which have complex and physical settings is one which can be elucidated through an analysis of spatial conventions. It is this sense which we intend to be a contribution of architectural theory. To put it more briefly, it is an analysis of 'positions', which need to be explained in terms of their signification as well as their linguistic dimension. If we extend this from the courtroom to theatrical space, theatrical space is obviously formed, in part, by the 'open' frame of the theatre building but remains unspecified without the co-existence of the actors and the audience. Obviously it is the performance and all the conventions which govern it that fully define the space of drama. It is the 'event' (of architectural theories) - as this is realised through the characters of drama that make space exist. That space cannot be equated or reduced to the space of the theatre building. It was through this perspective that in the second chapter of our thesis we were concerned to identify the role and action of the main 'subjects' (or the main participants, as we use to call them) of drama. Thus it was necessary to investigate the role of the poet, the actor and the audience, not so much in order to understand how they experience theatrical space, but in reverse, in order to explore the way they influence the production of theatrical space.

It must have been clear by now that to understand theatrical space we had to decode performance. But in order to understand performance, we need to confront the issues of representation in antiquity through the notion of *mimesis* and the possible application of the term *eidolon* to the theatrical space. Drama and by extension dramatic space arose in its complexity if not in its full complexity at a definite moment in Greek history. That period is certainly marked by the rapid development of a whole series of representational techniques. But perhaps none of these techniques depended upon such complex relations of representation which nonetheless all seem to be produced at the precise moment of the birth of tragedy. One further target is then to reveal the importance of theatrical space as an innovative genre of space- the first representational space - the analysis of which could contribute to the understanding of the different notions of space in antiquity, especially the Platonic *Khora*. Those issues are confronted in the third chapter of this thesis where we argue that what we call the 'space in drama' depends upon a combination of different types of representations; representations whose referents can not be identified as they belong to the domain of myth. Thus our positive reason for using the resources of Greek philosophy to render the mechanisms of dramatic representation intelligible rests upon our wish to find material which would validate the proposition that these mechanisms were thinkable.

Clearly a central question in the investigation of theatrical space in terms of the arguments put forward above is the relationship between space and language. The analysis of the poetic text itself has increasingly been concerned with the difference between the statement '*annoncee*' and the speech '*enunciation*'.⁴ These questions of

⁴ See BENVENISTE E., *Problems in general linguistics*.

the address, of the subject of enunciation, of the addressee and of the relations between them indicate precisely the spatial moment of speech: that it may come from someone to someone else under specific conditions of representation. In the fourth and last of our chapters we will attempt to investigate the nature of what we call dramatic speech and its ability to create three-dimensional space on stage, in any of its forms (dialogue, monologue, direct, indirect). Theatrical text, the only surviving record of tragedy, becomes a basis for the understanding of this theatrical space. But how does the text, the language itself, come to complete - although never to complete the whole image of our perception of theatrical space? Is language able to define, to disclose space in general? How is it related with space? The former questions concerning the special connection of space with 'language' relate further our investigation with the pursuits of contemporary architectural theory. Recent theories of architecture have been preoccupied with the exploration of the interrelation of architecture with different disciplines⁵, mainly with language itself.⁶

The relation of architecture with language becomes more complex in two main ways which concisely refer on the one hand to the influence the analysis of the structure of

⁵ See also the investigation of the correspondence between architecture and music in Derrida's article *Why Peter Eisenman writes such good books*. Derrida refers to Nietzsche's *Ecce homo* in order to elucidate the meaning of one of Eisenman's projects. 'I propose to speak of music, of musical instruments, in one of Eisenman's work in progress'. He adds: '...I knew that discourse and language did not count for nothing in the activity of architects and above all in Eisenman's. (...) Eisenman's architecture took its starting point from the very conditions of discourse, grammar and semantics. Writing opens a space in which two writings - the verbal and the architectural- are inscribed the one within the other, outside the traditional hierarchies'. See DERRIDA J., *Why Eisenman writes such good books* in *Restructuring architectural theory*, edited by DIANI M., and INGRAHAM C. ,p.99-105

⁶ The influence on architecture of other disciplines is connected with a more general phenomenon. It is a fact that since the emergence of post-modernism, the distinctions between different disciplines collapses. See also JAY P., *Critical Historicism and the discipline of Architecture*, in *Restructuring Architectural Theory*, ed. by DIANI M., and INGRAHAM C. , 1989, p.27. 'Because Hayden White's Appropriation of the study of fictional narratives focused attention on 'history' was in fact plotted in narratives, the distinctions between history and literature have blurred; because Lacan was able to use structural linguistics to show how the unconscious is structured like a language, the distinctions between psychoanalysis, linguistics, and literary narratives have also blurred...'

language has on the development of architectural discourse and on the other, to the influence architectural discourse has on architectural practice. We see then that recent architecture criticism is not limited to the reading of buildings and the marking off of historical periods, but contributes to the development of architecture practice itself. The interconnection of architecture with speech and language⁷ has resulted, on the one hand, obviously in a series of theoretical writings and, on the other - less obviously - in a series of buildings⁸, which have often themselves been considered to be more an experimental approach to the production of architectural space rather than important contributions to architecture.

The investigation of theatrical space's relation with the word could be made through the study of certain examples from the trilogy *Oresteia*. Those examples, dealt with in the last part of the fourth chapter give us the opportunity to validate our approach and justify our conclusions concerning the issues which this thesis intended to clarify.

Even if the relation of our thesis to some aspects of architectural theory may be clear by this point, we would like to underline that our analysis does not so much intend to give new answers concerning the nature of theatrical space but to open new questions.

In this sense our analysis remains incomplete. However we hope that those new questions which are the result of our methodological approach contribute not only to the existing scholarship about drama but also to the recent architectural theories.

⁷ See also the article of LEDDY T., *Dialogical Architecture in Philosophy and Architecture*, edited by MITIAS M.H.

⁸ Paul Jay notes that '*recent critical theory - particularly structuralism and deconstruction - has had an impact on the construction of buildings (P. Eisenman's work comes particularly to mind)*' See JAY P., *Critical Historicism and the discipline of Architecture*, in *Restructuring Architectural Theory*, edited by DIANI M., and INGRAHAM C., p.26.

CHAPTER ONE

Different approaches to Greek tragedy and theatrical space

1.1 Greek tragedy's descendents

The problem for this thesis in confronting the range and the wealth of writings on Greek tragedy is the tendency for the literature to concentrate on particular elements of drama without necessarily connecting them into a single unified view. As we shall see in this chapter, there have been many different readings of classical drama. Since Aristotle's *Poetics* there has been a strong tradition, philological and humanist, of reading Greek tragedy as essentially a poetic text. Another reading has been more concerned to interpret the dramatic texts as evidence of the nature of Greek culture as a whole⁹. On the other hand, those scholars who have been concerned with the Greek theatre and its elements have tended to be architectural and archaeological in their references.¹⁰ They have concentrated upon the tectonic elements of the theatre¹¹ rather than what we are calling the space opened up by drama. The overall effect is to have unintentionally constructed divisions between the different areas of scholarship,

⁹ See, for example, the work of Cambridge Ritualists who mainly claim that tragedy must be studied as a ritual : Murray, G: *Euripides and his Age* (1913), Harrison, J.: *Themis* (1913), who attempted to explain the performance as ritual, and the work of Girard, R and Dodds, E.R. We will examine later on this chapter scholars who belong to or are influenced by structuralistic anthropology which 'uncovers ways in which the polarizing tendency of Greek language can be related to the rituals staged in drama' (Goldhill, *CCGD*). See also the work of Gernet, Vernant, Zeitlin.

¹⁰ See the work for example of W. Dorpfeld and E. Reisch: *Das griechische Theater* (1896), Stuart: *Antiquities of Athens* (1830), E.R.Fiechter, *Die baugeschichtliche Entwicklung des antiken Theaters* (1914) or, later, the work of W. B. Dinsmoor, *The architecture of ancient Greece* (1950).

¹¹ See Haigh 's, *The Attic Theatre* (1898) or the very similar work of Pickard-Cambridge, *The*

which has resulted in a situation where these areas have tended not to communicate with each other. One major consequence of this was the post-Renaissance process in which classical drama was experienced by educated readers as poetry rather than a performance text. Educated Europe increasingly read these texts rather than saw them performed until their connection with performance became more and more tenuous. Classical tragedy in effect became a poetic genre and the Renaissance's renewed interest did not lead to a revival of its staging. The first certain evidence of a performance of Greek tragedy after antiquity is that of Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* at Vicenza in 1585, but this production 'remained a more or less isolated event until the end of the eighteenth century'¹².

What happened with this practice of reading of tragedy after the Renaissance was the 'the adaptation of tragic plots to create a new corpus of dramatic texts.'¹³ Classical drama almost became a resource, a set of plots or models for post-Renaissance dramatists to rework. As 'the texts of the extant Greek tragedies began to be available to Western Europe in Italy in the fifteenth century'¹⁴ they provided the ideal material for some of the new tragedies to come. These new tragedies did not necessarily follow the structure of the Greek tragedies but they were written in a poetic form with the intention of being performed. To mention briefly some distinguished examples of a series of such tragedies, we can start from: *Antigone* by Robert Garnier (1580). *Antigone* or *La Pieta*, '... provides an excellent example of the strengths and

Dramatic Festivals of Athens (2nd edition 1968).

¹² BURIAN P., *Tragedy adapted for stages and screens: the Renaissance to the present*, CCGD, p.228.

¹³ BURIAN P., CCGD, p.229.

¹⁴ BURIAN P., CCGD. See also: Bolgar, *The Classical Heritage and its Beneficiaries* (1954) p. 494-504, about the tragedies which were re-published in Italy (in the 15th century) between 1495-1518, as also about the translations of Greek authors ,p.508-25, and Highet, *The Classical Tradition*, 1949.

*limitations of humanist tragedy*¹⁵ but like the later plays of this kind it is not intrinsically dramatic. With Racine's *Phedre*, (1677) one hundred years later, as also with Goethe's *Iphigenie auf Tauris* (1787), Greek tragedy is in some sense put again at the centre of the European stage. Even so, European audiences experienced just the adaptation of the original plays to contemporary ideological perspectives and dramatic techniques. This tradition has continued into the twentieth century, with the famous examples of Cocteau's *La Machine Infernale* (1932), based on the myth of Oedipus the King, T.S.Eliot's *The Family Reunion* (1939), based on the *Oresteia*, as also with Anouilh's *Antigone* (1947). More recent examples come from the so called post-modernist H. Muller's *Medea* in the eighties, whose structure, language and meaning is completely detached from the original Euripidean play. The restrictions of this thesis do not allow us a full presentation of the above cases. What we need to emphasise is that even if the above production of plays is based on classical tragedies and their myths, they should not be considered as a continuation of the ancient classical dramaturgy, as they are completely detached from the essential context and structure of ancient Greek drama. Even if we deal with plays which aim to be performed and not read, there is an obvious shift of interest to the poetic rather than the dramatic 'meaning' of the plays.

Besides the new plays for the theatre, there is also the development of a new genre, opera, which is also influenced by the extant Greek originals. This new performance genre, which according to P. Burian crystallised at the end of 16th century, bases its general structure and plots¹⁶ on classical tragedy. '*By the end of the century, (...), the*

¹⁵ P. BURIAN P., *CCGD*.

¹⁶ Earlier operas based their plots on pastoral drama, as also on the texts of Virgil (Cavalli's *Didone*), Ovid (Monteverdi's *Arianna*), and on Roman History (Monteverdi's *L'incoronazione di Poppea*). See BURIAN P., *CCGD*, p.262.

view that in ancient times the entire tragedy was sung had assisted the birth of the new form of music drama that we have come to call opera. The 'inventors' of opera ... took upon themselves the task of reviving something unknown since antiquity: the fusion of music and drama in a continuous and unified work of art.¹⁷ There is no doubt that opera became gradually a genre of performance which revived Western civilisation's interest in ancient Greek mythology, but whatever its inventors' initial intentions, opera has no real relation with classical tragedy. This is not only because opera composers considered wrongly that tragedy's spoken parts were sung,¹⁸ but mainly because opera's performance is based on entirely new codes and conventions, distant from the conventions of the performances of Greek drama. At an even further distance from classical drama while still taking the latter as its model is the 19th century 'poetic drama', frequently based upon classical themes, but in the abstract sense in which the dramatic texts make no real concession to the constraints and possibilities of actual staging. These texts were in a fundamental sense objects to be read through the technique of an internal staging in the imagination. In England in the 19th century such dramas in the works of Shelley, Browning and Hardy were accepted by the reading public in this spirit. They were rarely and only with difficulty staged. This created a kind of cultural technology in which classical culture was overwhelmingly associated with the solitary act of reading. Clearly this denigrated the significance of the audience and the regime of performance. This tendency was perhaps most fully realised in the role that classical drama played in elite forms of secondary and higher education in Central and Western Europe.

¹⁷ BURIAN P., *Tragedy adapted for stages and screens: the Renaissance to the present*, CCGD, p.262.

¹⁸ The Florentine *camerata* of Count Giovanni de Bardi was 'the group of musicians, scholars, and poets whose discussions provided theoretical practical foundations for the beginnings of opera.... They were wrong in assuming that Greek tragedies were entirely sung'. See BURIAN P., CCGD, p.262.

This brief account of the influence of Greek tragedy's relation to more modern plays and poetry, since its discovery by the Renaissance, is not our real topic. What is important for our thesis is the way European culture treated this corpus in terms of the history of literary criticism. Here we see a strong tradition which starts from Aristotle's *Poetics*, and which reads and analyses Greek tragedy as a form of poetry. The result of this has tended to split research at a scholarly level from cultural analysis. This division has been compounded by the way Greek theatres, as built objects, have tended to fall into the province of the architectural historian and of the archaeologist. This brief observation is nonetheless sufficient to establish the case that the analysis of Greek theatre or rather the analysis of theatrical space in Greece has been relatively neglected or has slipped out of focus in favour of the fields of poetry on the one hand and architecture and archaeology on the other. It is the argument of this thesis that such a system of specialisation has assisted in the process of neglecting the object of this thesis: the nature of theatrical space as such. Only relatively recently have scholars turned towards the importance of re-establishing the idea of performance and as a consequence theatrical, rather than literary or architectural, space. Paradoxically, the increasing concern within European modernist drama to foreground the question of the fundamental nature of drama may have led to a renewed concern with the authentic condition of Greek tragedies and to a renewed interest in their dramatic space. Yet these pressures have only recently begun to be reflected in classical studies themselves, so strongly did the weight of the humanist and philological traditions bear heavily upon the experience of the play either as text or as poetry. Of course we should acknowledge the fact that the fundamental preoccupation of traditional scholarship with drama as poetry has not precluded some

authors' concern with performance, as we will see later in this chapter.¹⁹ These approaches themselves have been attempted in order to reconstruct the structure of drama through the question of its performance.

Theoretical approaches to Greek tragedy could be divided into two main categories, although both of them have based their arguments on the same evidence and material, mainly the dramatic texts in the form in which we have inherited them.²⁰ To the first category belong the scholars who give to the text a predominant significance, while to the second belong those scholars who stress the importance of the performance and who have attempted to explore its structure through the conventions of drama and its stagecraft. One should not exaggerate the differences between them, since they all share a common conviction, which is that drama itself is made up of different elements. We believe that both these categories are in a sense ultimately influenced by the Aristotelian approach, either at the level of the fundamental meaning of drama or at the level of Aristotle's methodological approach. Indeed, it would be impossible to overestimate the importance of the Aristotelian tradition, not only in arenas of classical studies but also in fields of the semiotics of drama, for the whole structuralist enterprise and indeed for contemporary theatrical practice. We take the view, as we have already indicated, that there are at least two separate obstacles in approaching the object of this thesis. The first concerns the way in which the history of scholarly concerns with Greek drama has divided the field into a number of pre-existing specialisations; philology, textual criticism, cultural analysis, architectural history and

¹⁹ See p.25, 32-34

²⁰ There is no doubt that the texts have reached to us with different kind of interventions. Easterling (CCGD, p.225) points out that '*it is hardly conceivable that any complete tragedy from the early days could have survived to be transmitted to the Middle Ages and beyond through the performance tradition alone (...) and without the intervention of scholars*'. See also GOLDHILL S., CCGD, p.325.

archaeology. Somehow the object of our research has fallen between the interstices of these specialisations. The second and related proposition is that the dominant strain of humanist concern has not really interested itself in the theatrical at all. In this thesis we seek to overcome the problems with the first issue and to oppose the second tendency as such. In the rest of this chapter we will attempt to present the basic arguments of different categories of scholarship, hoping to show that they are, in some of their views, closer to each other than they may originally seem. Since the main body of scholarship concerning the particular question of drama in antiquity comes firstly from classicists, we will try to select and trace some of the most significant studies in the field in order to state and clarify our position.

1.2 'The significance of the text' – Scholarly tradition

Firstly, we will consider those scholars who form what we call the classical philological tradition. Of course, such a broad category includes scholars who belong to different schools of criticism. Goldhill discerns ' *traditional Classics* ' who for him are ' *set in opposition to literary criticism or to the researches of historical anthropology, which are constructed as 'modern' Classics.*'²¹ Since we argue that the practice of traditional philology always privileges the attempt to reconstruct the text in its origin, it can be seen that such an approach militates strongly in favour of a fundamental text-based conception of classical drama. This is not a criticism of philology as such but is a reminder that the practice of philology is limited by its self imposed criterion of the text.

²¹ GOLDHILL S., *CCGD*, p.327.

Modern research into the nature of classical drama and especially of tragedy comes mainly from Germany from the end of 18th century to the 19th century. Both share a view about the status of the texts in question. Writers as different as Lessing, Schiller, Schelling, Hegel, Schopenhauer and Wagner were interested in Greek tragedy as a means of elucidating their own general theoretical positions. For example, as Silk and Stern note, *'for Schopenhauer Greek tragedy has a significance that must be comprehended in terms of his particular brand of pessimism: it provides a powerful demonstration of the vanity of all desires of the 'will', its foolish stubbornness, and the unworthiness of all its goals. In so doing tragedy teaches us to contemplate with equanimity, (...), that which we cannot change and should therefore speedily abandon.'*²² It is clear that such scholars were not solely interested in the historical invention of tragic theatre but rather with how they could use Greek tragedy to address problems of the 19th century. This did not hold back more historical scholarship and according to Goldhill it is the German scholarship of the 19th century that *'took what had often been an amateur study of the ancient world to new heights of professionalism with the exhaustive collection of evidence and the extensive discussion of technical problems.'*²³ Certainly the work of Wilamowitz, Rohde, Flietchter, Dorpfeld, Arnold and others is preoccupied not only with the content of the tragedies but also with the performative aspects of drama, its conventions and stagecraft. The plays become the main evidence for information and assumptions (often wrong and anachronistic) about the performance itself. Their research is also based on the given archaeological and textual evidence. One of the examples of such a study is the work of J.W. Donaldson, *The Theatre of the Greeks*, (London 1849), where what was attempted was the presentation of the origin of drama, its literary

²² SILK & STERN, *Nietzsche on Tragedy*, p.3.

²³ GOLDHILL S., *CCGD*, p.326.

history and its representation on stage. As the objective is also concerned with the staging and performance in a material sense, the question seems to be not what the conditions of performance were but what was the organisation of Greek performance, as established from the archaeological evidence and the plays themselves.²⁴ Forty years later in Haigh's *The Attic Theatre* (1898) we have, maybe for the first time in an organised form, a full account of the dramatic contests of Athens and of their preparation, a presentation of the role of the author, *choregos*, actor, and chorus, and also a history of the theatre building from '*the old wooden theatres until the stage building in Roman times*'. The form and the structure of this book - as revised and in part re-written in the third edition by Pickard Cambridge - was to be influential for similar later attempts²⁵. But for all this historical research, very little attention was paid to the invention of the theatre as such, as a revolutionary event in Athens. We might speculate that because the institution of drama was so well established as to become almost second nature to Europe, its invention had become almost unthinkable.

In 1872 Nietzsche's '*The Birth of Tragedy*' appeared. This text has obviously been extremely difficult for classicists to incorporate and the furious reaction of

²⁴ The description of the stage is based on subjective assumptions often wrong and anachronistic. As an example we can take Fraenkel's description of the palace and the area of the orchestra in *Agamemnon*. In *Theatre of Greeks*, p.316, he argues that the palace from the roof of which the watchman is able to see '*as far at least as the Acharnean mountains* (v.309)' must be of a '*considerable height*'. He also argues that '*the front of the palace is adorned with altars of various gods*' just because in his opinion the herald on his entering (v. 503) could not address the gods without the representation of their altars on stage. In the same spirit he describes in p. 319, the stage in *Cho*: '*The scene of the first act is a desolate tract of country at some distance from the city,, perhaps hilly and certainly provided with brushwood for the concealment of Orestes and Pylades...*' From the above examples we can ascertain that the described representation on stage is based on the one hand on subjective assumptions, on the other on the rules of a realistic representation. But whether a 'realistic', 'abstract', or 'symbolic' representation was in any sense in accordance with the conventions and the nature of classical tragedies' representation is under consideration.

²⁵ See Pickard Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, or the work of Webster.

Wilamowitz typified a certain reaction of philologists. Clearly the book's immense influence was at the level of cultural criticism as a whole rather than as a professional contribution to the knowledge of Greek drama. This thesis is not the appropriate place to evaluate the nature of Nietzsche's contribution, still less to assess its effects upon modern sensibility. But from the partial point of view of this thesis we may note that Nietzsche's work was less formally revolutionary than we might think, partly because of the fact that it did not escape the 'traditional' categorisation of the elements of drama. For Nietzsche, as every other *scholar from the tradition of theoretical enquiry into the nature of tragedy*²⁶, still defined his position by reference to Aristotle's Poetics. Although Tanner in his introduction to BT argues that Nietzsche attacked the dominant account of tragedy as inherited from Aristotle, Silk & Stern maintain on the contrary that '*Nietzsche's book and the Poetics have more in common than is generally realised.*'²⁷ In their book '*Nietzsche on Tragedy*' they present analytically where Nietzsche's theory converges with Aristotle's *Poetics* without neglecting to underline the important differences between the two works. We would insist that Nietzsche's greatest differentiation from Aristotle concerns the hierarchy of the elements of drama. Thus, if for Aristotle the sequence of importance according to *Poetics* ch. 6. is '*mythos, ethe, dianoia* (reason), *lexis* (verbal expression), *melopoia* (song composition), *opsis*', Nietzsche puts the music first. Nonetheless by considering music as the main element of drama, Nietzsche falls into the Aristotelian tradition which insists on the hierarchy of the 'elements' of drama and which misses the ability to conceive tragedy as a 'whole'. Therefore he escapes the main methodological approach of classical scholarship which was the '*scholarly history of the text and its glosses*' but yet he adopts the basic Aristotelian categories of the

²⁶ SILK M. S., & J. P. STERN, *Nietzsche on Tragedy*, p.1.

²⁷ SILK M. S., & J. P. STERN, *Nietzsche on Tragedy*, p. 220. See ch.8, i. *The BT and*

components of drama. The assumption that drama is divided into different components is not the only point of contact with the *Poetics*. Most important could be considered the issue of the origin of drama, where Nietzsche did not differentiate himself from 'most modern theorists', who 'have derived tragedy from the worship of the god Dionysus. This is in effect what Aristotle did (*Poetics*, ch. 4) by tracing it back into dithyramb, ...'²⁸ Another issue from the point of view of this thesis is Nietzsche's agreement with Aristotle that visual representation (*opsis*) is of the least importance for the understanding of tragedy '.... we are assured by Aristotle that horrific optical effects have no place in tragedy, because they induce the wrong emotional response (*Poetics*, ch.14). In the same vein Nietzsche tells us in BT 14, that the essence of tragedy is destroyed by optimistic dialectic.' Thus we could include Nietzsche among those scholars who contributed to distancing tragedy from the stage, the only place where it could be completed.

Nietzsche's analysis did not actually involve a reconstruction or even an analysis of the conventions or of the meaning of tragedy. Clearly the spoken and the unspoken horizon of the entire text is the issue of Wagner and his theories. It was this relation to Wagner which determined Nietzsche's interest in the relation of music to tragedy.²⁹ To him, 'Tragedy absorbs the highest musical ecstasies, and thus brings music to a state of true perfection.' Tragedy recites on stage the plot of myth and for Nietzsche what is important is that it does so in musical terms. Thus, as we have said, it is the

Aristotle's *Poetics*.

²⁸ SILK M. S., & J. P. STERN, *Nietzsche on Tragedy*, p.142. On p.140 Else's reference to the subject is clear: 'If any single impression concerning the origin of tragedy is fixed in the minds of most literate members of western society, it is that tragedy stems from Dionysus and satyrs. This dominant impression is the work of as unlikely a pair of collaborators as ever lived: Aristotle and F. Nietzsche'. But Else himself argues that tragedy did not evolve, but was invented. See Else: *The Origin and Early Form of Greek Tragedy* (1965).

²⁹ Nietzsche's critique about this in the later editions of *B.T.*

music that for him is the main element of drama - an element for which there is no surviving record. As a consequence he gives major importance to the chorus. *'What happened when epic was replaced by tragedy was that the principle of individualisation gave way to the chorus, apparent individuals submerging their identities in the mass.'* Nietzsche did not think that tragedy imitated life but rather in order to approach and analyse it, he was forced to adopt his famous dipole, the Apollinian and the Dionysiac, which according to him co-exist in any real form of art. In introducing the categories of the Apollinian and the Dionysiac, he reveals his main position not only on dramatic literature, but by implication about politics, aesthetics, *'... the nature of metaphysics, and a consideration of a specific phenomenon in the history of art'*. One could say that Nietzsche's influence concerning dramatic discourse was indirect, since he used tragedy as an example in order to express his overall theory about art. However his contribution on drama was important in the sense that the debate he provoked is still reflected by the different scholars of the same discipline.

Later classicists were involved in different ways with tragedy's content, context and role. A dominant figure of the British classics was Eduard Fraenkel with his three-volume edition of *Agamemnon* in 1950, in which he attempted a line-by-line commentary of the whole tragedy in a pedantic way that no one had attempted before for the whole of a tragedy. *'Fraenkel not only mobilises an astonishingly extensive reading of ancient sources to explicate the text, but also traces the history of the recognition of problems and their attempted solutions throughout the scholarly tradition...Indeed Fraenkel sets exemplary standards for the philological approach to*

Greek tragedy.'³⁰ Fraenkel was interested in the content of tragedy and as Goldhill points out, his way of comprehending the play was based on a '*model of recognition and solution of philological problems.*' But the dramatic meaning of the text is often reduced to its philological value as understood under the categories, the aesthetics and the morals of the early 20th century,³¹ while his indirect preoccupation with performance is shown only inside the framework of his understanding of the play.

Of course, many classicists (some of them already mentioned in p. 5), sought to supplement their philological research by referring to architectural history. But even with this, there is from the standpoint of this thesis a problem. The practice of historical investigation and reconstruction organises evidence around a series which runs from the 'earlier' to the 'later'. This is certainly how the history of architectural style is produced. It treats the physical theatre as a building type which changes over time rather than a revolutionary innovation. The archaeological evidence has often been treated as stable information obvious in its interpretation and identified with what we mean in general by 'truth'. What was not clear until recently was that '*... most archaeologists would only ever claim to offer interpretations, even if they might claim that some interpretations can be demonstrated to be more 'true' interpretations of the 'real' past than others.*'³² In a general critique of the approaches and methodologies of archaeology, Ian Bapty argues that '*...The whole elaboration of*

³⁰ GOLDHILL S., *Modern critical approaches in Greek tragedy*, CCGD., p.326.

³¹ One of the most famous examples of misinterpretation as pointed out by Goldhill is that of the red carpet in *Ag. Thus for Fraenkel 'Agamemnon steps on the tapestries spread for him by Clytemnestra because 'in his reluctance to get the better of a woman ... he proves a great gentleman'- a view which says far more about Fraenkel 's ideas of social interaction than about Greek ideas of gender and persuasion'*, GOLDHILL S., *Modern critical approaches to Greek tragedy*, in CCGD, p.327. This example proves how misleading and anachronistically wrong such methodological approach of tragedy could be if the scholar interprets such important gestures according to the perception of his own times.

³² BAPT IAN, *Nietzsche , Derrida and Foucault: Re-excavating the meaning of archeology*,

*excavation techniques and the involved and minutely regulated discipline of recording, observing and preserving the material record of the past connects to the assumption that this process... must necessarily be producing a more 'true' past'. But as he stresses, '...it is a very specific level of truth which has been produced through this development, (...) a truth which is real in itself- in terms of the discipline to which it belongs- but reveals no necessary knowledge about the past where 'features' and 'contexts' nominally originate.'*³³ Thus, the archaeological evidence which came to light during the last century, even if provides useful information, was not by itself sufficient to understand the context and meaning of drama as an innovation. This evidence has been used by scholars who attempted a detailed presentation of the existing 'data' as their main reference besides the texts. Inevitably those scholars had often to interpret the material they had, giving interpretations which have been proved in some of the cases anachronistic and misleading.³⁴

Pickard Cambridge was among the first (in the 20th century) to look at the context of drama in terms of the festival of Dionysus and the theatrical events in the theatre of Dionysus in Athens.³⁵ His approach presents the evolution of theatre building and its interior acting area, from the years prior to Lycurgus until the Hellenistic and Roman period. While the main corpus of his research includes material which derives from the texts of the plays, he bases his presentation on the archaeological evidence. In his last book *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*³⁶ he was concerned with the presentation

in *Archaeology after Structuralism*, ed. by Ian Bapty and Tim Yates, p.268.

³³ BAPTY IAN, *Nietzsche, Derrida and Foucault: 'Re-excavating the meaning of archeology' in , Archaeology after structuralism*, ed. by BAPTY I. and YATES T., p.269.

³⁴ We should not forget that the evidence which we have (theatre buildings, pottery etc) is mainly post-5th century.

³⁵ PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE, A.W., *The Theatre of Dionysus in Athens*.

³⁶ PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE, A.W., *The Dramatic festivals of Athens*. The dramatic festivals under study are the *Antheateria*, the *Lenaia*, the *Chytroi*, the rural *Dionyssia* and the

and analysis of all the dramatic festivals of Athens in order to define the framework in which the theatrical event existed and developed. In the first part of this book he also analyses the structure of the "lesser festivals", which used to take place in many theatres outside Athens. (Rhamnous, Ikarion, Eleusis, Piraeus, etc.) This chapter, which investigated the general arrangement of those theatres, clarified the relation of the theatre building to the broader sacred site, in comparison to the theatre of Dionysus in Athens. Coming to the biggest and most important among those festivals, which was the City Dionysia, he integrates his research by presenting in four categories (Actors, Chorus, Costumes, Audience) what forms the tragic or the comic performance, avoiding direct reconstruction and insisting on the overall space of the acting area.

In the late 1950s and 60s, T.B.L. Webster and scholars associated with him (notably A. M. Dale and N. Hourmouziades) '*pursued energetic research into monuments and textual detail in order to clarify the performance conventions of Greek Tragedy*'.³⁷ Webster concentrated more on the evolution of drama outside Athens, in the mainland of Greece, Italy and Sicily, the islands, Asia and in Africa.³⁸ We should note here that the evolution of drama in all those places came after the 5th century evolution of Athenian drama, although some of the theatres date from the 5th century.³⁹ In his work, *Monuments Illustrating Tragedy and Satyr Plays*⁴⁰ Webster provided a

Panathenaia. The tragic poets had the chance also to compete in *Lenaia*, but only in the *City Dionysia* do we find the well-known procedure where three tragic poets enter the contest for the prize presenting four plays: three tragedies and one satyr play.

³⁷ WILES D, *Tragedy in Athens*, p.5.

³⁸ WEBSTER, T.B.L., *Greek Theatre Production*.

³⁹ WEBSTER, T.B.L., *Greek Theatre Production*. For the Greek early theatres outside Athens see Wiles' *Tragedy in Athens*, Chapter 2.

⁴⁰ WEBSTER T.B.L, *Monuments Illustrating Tragedy and Satyr Plays*. In this work Webster comes to complete a series begun with *Monuments Illustrating Old and Middle Comedy* and *Monuments Illustrating New Comedy*.

valuable classification of the existing monumental material, which for the period with which our research is concerned (5th century) is limited to Attic vases. His purpose was to trace the main lines of development in staging, costumes and masks. Despite the significance of all this material, he recognises that one has to remain critical about it, as the 'depicted' information is quite often misleading.⁴¹ Even so, he provides us not only with valuable data about the performance, but he also points out the influence that the theatre had on other fields of art such as sculpture or vase painting.

It is clear that all the above studies have an overall intention to present and synthesise existing evidence concerning the production of ancient performances, although their conclusions were based on the elaboration of the monumental material, on the excavations, on the *Scholia* from different sources, and above all on the texts of the plays themselves. Although they were concerned to unite them, they all tend to add up to a general and systematic representation of drama in antiquity. But the argument of this thesis is that the synthesis of independent strands of research did nothing except to testify to the fundamental absence of an account of theatrical space as such. Even when they focused on the visual aspect of performance, they did not question the form of the produced space itself. Insofar as they have a concept of the space, it was for them linked with the idea of the architecture of the theatre. The specialisation of fields of research even when they were brought together in a synthesis still left untouched the above question since that question has been cast into oblivion by the very process of specialisation. Since no form of research had assumed the direct responsibility of answering, general questions about the form of dramatic space, so this synthesis failed

⁴¹ WEBSTER T. B. L, *Greek Theatre Production*, '...The artist (...) may add figures in the particular scene because they make the story clear (...) These pictures then are seldom completely accurate realistic presentations of a stage scene, but it would be foolish to reject them because they are the records of an intelligent artist rather than of a stupid camera. They

to answer this question also. Within this synthesis, a global account of theatrical space was achieved by linking the text to the idea of the theatre building. But this link, which moves directly from text to theatre building, is precisely what obscures the issue of theatrical space. The space of the stage was mainly presented as a consequence of the potential use of the machinery and stage conventions as they were implied by each of the surviving texts of the plays.

The idea that the space and the visual dimension of drama were of central importance for the understanding of drama as a whole is shown in different disciplines. In some sense, the preoccupation of Webster and Pickard Cambridge with the histories and the conventions of dramatic performance underlines its significance for the understanding of drama. One might think that contemporary theory, and especially semiotics, would open up the question of the importance of the structure of the space and of the performance. For the first time, it might be said a challenge was mounted to the 'text' as being the authoritative basis for interpreting drama. Suddenly the text is 'an incomplete document' (not because it needs to be supplemented by knowledge but because it is incomplete in respect to the conventions of performance and without its enactment on stage). As a discipline, semiotics refers to any systems of signs. In this formal sense, it might refer to language, it might refer to textual signs or to performance signs.⁴² It does not deal with an empirical field of reference but is concerned with the dimension of signification which might belong to any corpus of evidence. It is this fact which might have pre-disposed this thesis to be sympathetic to semiotics since its object is whatever is determined by the form of analysis. In this

must be interpreted...'

⁴² Edmunds in *TSHP* p.3 notes that '*.... whereas a semiotic of non dramatic poetry is the study of how language is encoded in a text, semiotics of theatre is the study of how a multiplicity of codes of which language is only one affect and refer to one another*'.

sense we might hope for considerable results from semiotics of performance, not because semiotics privileges 'performance' as against 'text' or even as against 'language', but rather because we might think it has to bear upon the question of the structure of theatrical conventions as such manifested in performance. Moreover, there is one figure outside the field of scholarship whose work on the theatre has influenced the attempt to specify the character of drama and that is Antonin Artaud. One of the objectives of his writings in the late 1930s, was to overturn the predominance of the text in theatre. He completely denied that the theatrical event depends upon the structure of a text. Rather, he demanded a language '*... of signs, gestures and attitudes having an ideographic value (...) The mise-en-scene itself is to be considered as a language in space and in movement.*' The success of his thesis was great all over the stages of the Western world and "*it is now impossible to attend a theatrical performance that has not felt his influence positively or reactively,*" as Edmunds notes.⁴³ Even though he did not focus upon the classical drama, he did open up the field for a basic debate concerning the elements of tragedy in such a way as to privilege the discourse of performance. By polemical simplification, Artaud may be said to embody the opposition to Aristotelian views and the whole tradition of theatre since the Renaissance.

⁴³ Edmunds in *TSHP* p. 15 compares Artaud's theory about drama to the main Aristotelian views, attempting a parallel criticism on both of them. Thus he points out their main difference, which according to him is that '*Whereas Aristotle had said that tragedy could have its effect through reading or recitation and without performance, Artaud would largely do away with a written text and to the extent possible with an author*'. This juxtaposition eliminates both sides' arguments. However, there is always the risk of anachronisms as these two theories have been developed in different historical periods, both distanced from the period when classical drama flourished in Athens (5th BC).

1.3 Semiotics of space - Categories of theatrical space

A semiology of the theatre was initiated as a specific project from the seventies⁴⁴ and from the beginning it incorporated the semiotics of theatre and stage objects, in a way which might seem extremely promising from the point of view of the objectives of this thesis. This was not to say that classical drama was the object of its research, which rather tended to concentrate either upon 'modern drama' or 'drama in general'. As a consequence, there has been a vigorous debate about the applicability of the semiotics of theatre to classical drama. Contemporary scholars of Greek drama, such as Edmunds and Wiles, devote many references in their introductory chapters to a discussion of the relation of semiotic research to Greek tragedy. Central to it is the status of performance and consequently the signifiatory nature of theatrical space. Edmunds notes that ' *Semiotics of theatre provides a corpus of theory that, against Aristotle, legitimates the priority of spectacle or performance.*'⁴⁵ This approach might seem to be fruitful from the point of view of the argument of our thesis but immediately it poses a further obstacle: ultimately, the semiotician's methodological approach reverts to the decoding of the theatrical text. The promise of a spatial analysis seems to evaporate in the face of the continuing pre-eminence of the text as text. We should underline here that, of course, we are not ourselves questioning the importance of the text but rather insisting upon the need to articulate how the text is

⁴⁴ See the work of Kristeva Julia : *Semiotike* (1969), *Problemes de la structuration du texte in 'Theorie d' Ensemble* (1968) p.297-316, E. Aston - G. Savona, *Theatre as a sign system* (1991), Fischer - Lichte, *The semiotics of theatre* (1992), Elam K: *The semiotics of theatre and Drama* (1980), *Text appeal and the Analysis Paralysis: Towards a processual poetics of dramatic production*. In Altro Polo, *Performance: from product to process* (1989), Ubersfeld A., *L' ecole du spectateur*, and *Lire le theatre* (1981), De Toro F., *Theatre Semiotics, Text and Staging in Modern Theatre* (1995), and others.

⁴⁵ EDMUNDS, L. *TSHP*, p.23.

one moment in the realisation of the drama.⁴⁶ This is not so for one prominent figure in semiotics, Issacharoff, who even if he claims that '*the verbal is centred on the visible*', adds that, '*in this process of reference between codes, there is, of course, a hierarchy: language is the dominant code.*'⁴⁷ It is not surprising that ultimately Issacharoff proposes a hierarchy of the theatrical codes, in which the text takes the dominant position. Moreover, like other scholars of semiotics, he ends up dividing drama into traditional categories, which then are to be decoded and examined separately.

As a consequence of this theoretical situation, while semioticians appear to address spatial issues of performance, there is a limit to the type of the question which can be addressed. Many of them believe that one of the most intriguing points during performance is the co-existence of what we see on stage with what we do not see. '*Tragedy's most potent contrast is between visible and imagined space. Several kinds of invisible space in fact...*'.⁴⁸ The acceptance that 'invisible' places 'act' during performances has led different scholars to the development of imaginative but doubtful analyses. In the area of the semiology of theatre, this kind of spatial division has been expressed in the work of all the various semioticians, as we shall see. One

⁴⁶ Perhaps we also need to make a more general point, which concerns 'traditional' semiotics, at least as formulated by Saussure. It will be remembered that Saussure makes a fundamental distinction between '*langue*' and '*parole*'. The two taken together constitute 'language'. '*Langue*' then refers to the totality of existing signs, which are comprehended and maybe communicated between subjects. '*Parole*' usually translated as 'speech', refers on the one hand to the realization of the use of performance of '*langue*' but Saussure also assigns to it the role which subjects may exploit: that of creating new meanings. The problem with this formulation, which is designed to clarify the linguistic object, is that either it reduces parole back into '*langue*' simply as the vocalization of '*langue*', or it might respect the relevant autonomy of '*parole*' and the freedom of subjects to create new signs. But in this case it would require a linguistic of '*parole*'. Otherwise '*parole*' or 'performance' has independent sentence. This fact and the consequences for the limitation of semiotics were noticed in the early seventies by Julia Kristeva.

⁴⁷ EDMUNDS, L., *TSHP*, p.26.

⁴⁸ PADEL R., *Making Space Speak* in *NDD*, p.343.

first interesting but quite general remark about the different 'areas' of theatrical space (here the private and public) comes from E. Aston and G. Savona: *Use has been made of the studies of proxemics, i.e., the human use of space, carried out by anthropologists. Such studies have looked at how we organise our living space in terms of both the private and the public. Theatre draws 'parasitically' on these behavioural codes in relation to space, to the extent that they serve as an important dynamic in organising and creating the boundaries between spectator and performer*⁴⁹. One of the most important works on the structure and semiotics of theatrical space is that of Anne Ubersfeld. '*She commences her analysis with space, because all theatrical signs are located in space.*'⁵⁰ She then distinguishes three categories of space, in accordance with Issacharoff (1981)⁵¹: the *theatrical*, that is, the building, the *scenic*, that is, the acting area, and the *dramatic*, that is, the space of the text. When she does deal with real space, she suddenly moves to the context of the surrounding environment of the city, which in the case of classical drama is quite important. Erica Fischer -Lichte investigated this subject further arguing that the shape of the theatre building and its location gives us information about its origin and role in the city. '*...The circular shape employed in Greek theatre can be interpreted among other things with regard to the polis and its democratic constitution, yet the location of the Athenian theatre of Dionysus can be understood as a sign for the theatre's origins in the cult of Dionysus and the meaning it thus had for the polis of Athens.*'⁵²

⁴⁹ ASTON E., SAVONA G., *Theatre as a sign system*, p.112.

⁵⁰ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.15.

⁵¹ ISSACHAROFF, M., *Space and Reference in Drama*, *Poetics today* 2; 211-24.Repr. in *Discourse as Performance*, ch.5.

⁵² FISCHER- LICHT E., *The Semiotics of Theatre*, p.97.

This relation of the theatre building with the urban context taken together with the relation of drama to the *polis* is an issue which is central in many contemporary scholars' work. Simon Goldhill (1986) argues that we could not analyse drama outside the context of the institution of the *polis*.⁵³ Wiles makes an interesting contribution to the subject in examining the relation of the theatre building with the broader built (and unbuilt) topography not only in the case of the theatre of Dionysus but also of the theatres of the deme of Athens. One of the first important arguments of his *Tragedy in Athens* is the idea that the Greek theatre was not an empty space.

"Greek performances were created within and in response to a network of pre-existing spatial relationships." This view will be developed through the presentation of the theatre's relation to the surrounding public and sacred places, as part of a general site, which the audience experienced before and during the performance.⁵⁴

Wiles reminds us then that the limits of what Ubersfeld calls *theatrical space* in the theatre of Dionysus was quite undefined. Since this space was mainly a part of a religious, social, political site, the definition of what was internal or external remains controversial. The 'interior' scenic space, the acting area, is for Wiles also undefined, since we do not really know the relationship between the skene and the orchestra. He recognises that this theatrical /scenic/dramatic schema helps the modern spectator to capture the space by defining 'Where he sits, What he sees and What he imagines' but

⁵³ 'If we wish to understand the force and the direction of Greek tragedy, it is impossible not to bring into consideration the city of Athens, (...), which can be regarded as offering specific conditioning to its dramas' See GOLDHILL S., *Reading Greek Tragedy*, p.57.

⁵⁴ Wiles examines a number of theatres around Athens before ending up with the theatre of Dionysus. He concludes that the Greek theatre had "...a lack of a finished architectural frame" and was in constant evolution in response to the broader site. One has to conceive it firstly as a part of a process in which the audience had to participate, secondly as the end of a distinct promenade which the audience had to follow and finally, in its constant relation with the temple, and the altar. The performances were acted in honour of the god, who was represented by his statue. In the theatre of Dionysus the statue 'was part' of the audience, but in some other theatres, such as the theatre of the *demos of Ikarion*, it is obvious that the god is '... the pre-eminent spectator and humans take second place'.

he argues that this typology of space breaks down in the case of the ancient theatre, not only because the limits are fine but also because of the crucial role of the chorus, a 'body' between the audience and the actors. *'When we consider that the chorus are simultaneously actors and onlookers within the scenic space, and fellow citizens within the theatrical space, that the masks of the chorus signify simultaneously that the dancers are Greek sailors (or whatever their fictive role is) and that they are worshippers of Dionysus in an Athenian festival, then we have to lay aside any straightforward theatrical/scenic dramatic segmentation.'*⁵⁵ (See also Ch. 2, p.68 -71)

We have already seen how semiotics categorise the elements of drama and as a consequence how they categorise theatrical space itself. Issacharoff agrees with Ubersfeld's three categories (*dramatic, theatrical, scenic*) but makes a further division of *dramatic* space into the *diegetic*, the space which is described by the text and remains invisible on stage, and the *mimetic*, the space that is represented and visible. *'Mimetic space is represented on stage and made visible to an audience. Diegetic is described, that is referred to, in a dialogue and therefore confined to a merely verbal existence'*⁵⁶ Hourmouziades in his book: *'Terms and transformations in classical Greek tragedy'*⁵⁷ uses the same kind of distinction as Issacharoff, based on visual or non-visual existence of space. His first category *dramatic* equates with Issacharoff's *diegetic* (that is the space described in the text and not visually represented) and his second category, the *scenic*, equals Issacharoff's *mimetic* (which includes any visual object or building which forms the space of the performance). The criterion of visibility for the distinction of the different categories of theatrical space was wisely

⁵⁵ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.18

⁵⁶ ISSACHAROFF M., *Discourse on Performance*, p.58.

avoided by Ubersfeld, who as Wiles notes, '*recognised the difficulties of placing a frame around the visual signifying field*'⁵⁸ Such a schema might apply to the analysis of the modern theatre, but remains quite inappropriate for the understanding of tragedy in the 5th century in Athens. In this thesis⁵⁹ we will argue that in the case of classical drama the audience 'constructs' the two places simultaneously, as the '*diegetic*' space is represented and enacted by the actor, replacing or co-existing with the topographical space of the tragedy. Later⁶⁰ we will examine certain examples from the trilogy *Oresteia* in an attempt to prove that this type of distinction (between 'seen' and 'unseen' places) is rather misleading and anachronistic in the case of classical drama.⁶¹

Ultimately, the contribution of semiotics so far entails, from the point of view of this thesis, a regression to the condition of a hierarchy between the elements of drama and its division into different categories, as a condition for analysis. We will argue that this betrays an inability to grasp the complex totality of the drama.

1.4 The revaluation of performance in classical studies

If the initial attraction of semiotics was its promise to analyse the performance of drama, we should also recognise that there was a parallel shift amongst classical scholars, who have in the last twenty-five years developed a detailed enquiry into Athenian stagecraft. Performance is identified here mainly with the organisation of the stage space, which thus becomes the centre of the attention not only as a built

⁵⁷ HOURMOUSIADES, N., *Όροι και μετασχηματισμοί στην αρχαία ελληνική τραγωδία*

⁵⁸ WILES, D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.18.

⁵⁹ See 4th chapter, p150-155

⁶⁰ See 4th chapter, p.152-163

object but as a constantly changing system interconnected with the texts of the plays. This idea first appeared in the work of Oliver Taplin, who elucidated theatrical representation and its relation to the texts.

1.4.1 Performance criticism

The thesis of Oliver Taplin, *'The Stagecraft of Aeschylus'* (1977), focuses up on the space of tragedy, opening up a variety of issues concerning the correspondence of the text to the theatre building and to the space of the performance in Greek tragedy. Taplin, without neglecting to refer to the architecture of the theatre, examined the possibilities of the stage conventions and related them *"to the meaning of the play, bringing out also its visual meaning"*.⁶² In the first chapter of his book *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, establishing his *Aims and Scope*, he explains that he intends a) to make a contribution towards a grammar of the dramatic technique of the Greek tragedians b) to attempt a scene by scene commentary on Aeschylus' surviving tragedies from the aspects of dramatic and theatrical technique, c) to relate stage action to the meaning of the play and thus bring out its visual meaning. This was the first time that a comparative study of the two different parts (verbal and spatial) of tragedy had been made. It was also the first time that the spectator and not the reader are referred to as the main addressee of the play. *'The playwright's first requirement is his audiences' concentrated attention'*⁶³. His later book, *Greek Tragedy in Action*, does not deal with the structure of the play, but rather with the visual codes of the performance, as he tries to reveal its dramatic techniques. The way he chooses and in which he elaborates his subjects is subversive, as the aim of his research is to highlight the

⁶¹ For the same subject see also the two examples Wiles analyses in *Tragedy in Athens*, p.17.

⁶² TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p.2.

spectacle of performance, proposing it as the major substance of drama. One of his most inspired conceptions was the idea of the juxtaposition of different scenes into the same or in different tragedies, which visually and dramatically correspond to each other (*Mirror Scenes*). Later criticism of his work comes partly from the work of Simon Goldhill and mainly from Wiles who accepts that '*Taplin's work has had enormous influence and represents what I take to be a normative position within the academic community vis-a-vis Greek tragic performance*', but then he accuses him that '*like most others who have concerned themselves with ancient stagecraft, Taplin evinces no interest in critical theory, which is to say the methodological revolution that has been sweeping through literary studies since the 1960's*'⁶⁴ Then Wiles differentiates his position by reviewing some issues such as the meaning of the central space of the orchestra and the importance of the chorus, crucial for him but neglected by Taplin. Even if one agrees with Wile's critique, one has to recognise Taplin's contribution in the matters of the analysis and importance of the performance in relation to the text⁶⁵. We believe that his view, that it is not only the text which defines the space of the performance but it is also space and action that give meaning to the text, was supported successfully through the analysis of the tragedies of Aeschylus, opening up new perspectives to classical scholarship. In the chapters of this thesis, which follow, we will have the chance to follow some of his views in order to establish our arguments.

1.4.2 Modern classics and structuralism

⁶³ TAPLIN O., *SA*, p.18.

⁶⁴ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.16.

⁶⁵ To support his arguments Taplin does at some points make doubtful assumptions: '*Greek tragedy is a concentrated and single purpose art form: and it would be quite uncharacteristic for the actors to be doing one thing while talking about another. If actions are to be significant (...), then time and words must be spent on them*', *TSA*, p.31.

In the last twenty-five years in France, research into classical drama has been strongly influenced by the theses of Vernant and Vidal-Naquet. Vernant investigated Greek classical thought as a complex field of the projection and production of different routes of expression: philosophy, art, politics, science. He was influenced, he says in his own writings, ‘...by the historian Louis Gernet who was a pioneer in the application of anthropological methods to the study of ancient Greece, and also by I. Meyerson who developed the field known as historical psychology...’⁶⁶ he aimed to expand the area of classical studies by proving that the right approach is through the contribution of historical anthropology, linguistics, and psychology. Two other important contemporary scholars, F. Zeitlin and S. Goldhill moved in parallel. In the case of the dramatic genre of tragedy, as Zeitlin notes in the introduction of Vernant's book ‘*Mortals and Immortals*’, the aim for Vernant ‘... is to take account of its three different historical aspects, none of which can be reduced to the other, but which hinge together and combine to constitute a unique human achievement. ‘Tragedy is a social and public phenomenon, sponsored by the polis in fifth century Athens, it is a new type of aesthetic production with its own formal shape and internal concerns. It also reflects a new psychological state of mind, concerned with developing notions of the agent, the will, individual responsibility, and choices in action, that represents a turning point in the history of the self.’⁶⁷ Vernant did not directly refer to the concept of the production of space in tragedy. Even so, any later effort by different scholars is bound to be influenced by the logic that Vernant introduced.⁶⁸ Vernant and Vidal Naquet's proposed type of analysis is related to and influenced by structuralism, at

⁶⁶ VERNANT, J.P. *Mortals and Immortals*, Introduction by F. Zeitlin, p.6.

⁶⁷ VERNANT, J.P. *Mortals and Immortals*, Introduction by F. Zeitlin, p.5, footnote 3, in Introduction.

⁶⁸ One of the most interesting articles about the space of the performance is Padel's *Making*

least that version of structuralism produced by Levi Strauss. Goldhill notes that '*One version of structuralism claims that polarities - binary oppositions such as male/female, up/down, raw/cooked- are the basic building blocks of a culture's mental landscape and that myth works to mediate such polarities*'⁶⁹. Now this runs together two quite different issues. Levi-Strauss may analyse apparently quite different myths from a culture in order to show that despite their surface differences, they are versions of each other, the reworking of a fundamental combinatory, as structuralism puts it. This is quite different from the claim that some cultures, including ancient Greece, are cultures which self- consciously foreground the status of polarities as a way of thinking. Recent scholars may have paid particular attention to these polarities in order to achieve a new reading of the texts of the tragedies.

D. Wiles' recent work may be taken as an example of this type of analysis in his attempt to investigate mainly the form and meaning of theatrical space. His research watches a new reading of theatrical space based on a very particular theoretical source. From the point of view of this thesis, his use of certain terms such as *absolute* space or *abstract* space comes from a vocabulary of recent theories, in particular the work of Lefevre.⁷⁰ In the first chapter of his book *Tragedy in Athens*, he develops the problem of space and remarks that in Athens of 5th century the concept of space '*was not an objective, scientific given but a subject for speculation, experiment and negotiation*'. He examines what he calls '*the spatial practices*' of 5th century Athens, a term which, as he indicates, is borrowed from Lefevre and Levi-Strauss, '*in order to demonstrate that a closed hermeneutic circle exists...*' aiming however '*to break out*

the Space Speak in NDD.

⁶⁹ GOLDHILL S., in CCGD, p.336.

⁷⁰ See LEFEVRE H., *The Production of Space*.

of the circle'.⁷¹ Wiles builds up his arguments by using a set of spatial binary oppositions (left/right, inside/outside, up/down, orchestra/auditorium). But how are we to interpret these terms? Are we to think that they belong to a universal set of spatial conditions which we can use in the certain knowledge that the Greeks shared because of the universality of the set, or is it being suggested that this constitutes a peculiarly Greek way of looking at space, one which is elaborated by Aristotle in the *Metaphysics*? Was classical thought formulated in the form of binary oppositions?⁷²

⁷¹ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.86. This problem is currently widespread in classical scholarship, which seeks to utilize anthropological thought as a means of analysis of classical thought. Perhaps its most brilliant proponent is the linguist Emile Benveniste. In his paper 'Categories of thought, Categories of language' Benveniste proposes in effect to analyze an aspect of Greek thought, through the technique of anthropological investigation known as 'linguistic relativism'. His proposition could be briefly summarized in terms of two linked propositions: firstly, the language of a culture determines the nature and the limits of its thought. Wittgenstein's dictum 'The limits of my language are the limits of my world' may be thought of as a motto of this proposition. The second proposition might be thought to be that languages because they construct particular worlds are radically untranslatable into each other, since to enter a language is to enter a unique world.

Benveniste, as it were, adopts these positions and in a brilliant linguistic reduction seeks to demonstrate that all the categories of Aristotle's *Metaphysics* are in fact categories of Greek grammar. This dazzling performance nonetheless provoked a careful but devastating critique by Derrida, playing a role which would surprise most classicists. Derrida is concerned to question the nature of Benveniste's reduction. Briefly Derrida's argument in *The Supplement to the Copula* consists in questioning the distinction between the category of thought and the category of grammar. At exactly the moment that Benveniste considers that he has broken from the philosophical category of thought in order to occupy the terrain of grammar, Derrida reminds him that elsewhere Benveniste has referred to grammar as the product of a non-philosophical history on the West and that therefore the distinction between 'thought' and 'grammar' whatever else, is a highly 'philosophical' distinction. Above all he questions the unthinking use of the term 'category' which is at play in the Benveniste paper, arguing again that the category of category also condenses within itself a long complicated philosophical history. This footnote is a highly abbreviated account of the debate but is necessary in order for our argument in the ensuing lines of the text to be clear.

⁷² See LLOYD G.E.R., in *Polarity and Analogy, Two types of argumentation in early Greek thought*. He argues that the use of opposites as a mode of reasoning is one of the earlier ones 'The frequency, variety and range of theories based on different sorts of opposites are well known to every student of Greek philosophy' (p.15). Lloyd discerns three basic stages: the pre-Platonic, the contribution of Plato, and the contribution of Aristotle, decisive for the history of the analysis of different modes of opposition. 'The use of theories based on opposites is the dogmatic tendency to construct simple comprehensive doctrines on the most general complex problems.... Aristotle was the first philosopher to undertake a full analysis of the different modes of opposition: but we may also give him credit for drawing attention to the common tendency to state a problem in terms of a choice between opposite extreme alternatives (as we say in terms of black and white) and for showing how misleading the statement of a problem in these terms may be.' (p.169). One of the most obvious problems was

His further comment that "*...in the 90s many traditional binaries have been deconstructed -nature and culture, male and female, mind and body, self and other,...Levi-Strauss's binarist structuralism has yielded to Derridean models of infinite erasure and regression. The difference between Greek and modern representations of space becomes increasingly pronounced*"⁷³ makes us wonder. Is it only because of Derrida's critique of Levi-Strauss that '*the difference between Greek and modern representations of space becomes increasingly pronounced*'? All this adds up to the judgement that the terms which Wiles adopts to characterise dramatic space seem unclear.

Wiles examines separately each part of the different couples of oppositions he introduces to organise his analysis of theatrical space (up/down, left/right). We believe that this is an inappropriate method for the understanding of the constantly transformed, open and undefined space of the theatre. In our view we can see no reason to privilege these categories as constituting theatrical space. We have no

to discern '*... a dividing line between those types of argument that have a claim to be demonstrative and those that are at best persuasive, or at worst frankly misleading.*' It is finally recognized that one obvious indulgence in this methodology concerns on the one hand the form of the opposites of the argument and on the other the in-between area of those opposites the area which is so often neglected or invalidated by the way the question is posed. Moreover, we refer to this area as if it depends upon and is defined by two different poles. The second part of the book is devoted to the particular importance of analogy as a mode of inference and discovery. '*Judged as abstract schemata, the two main types of theories which we find to be particularly common in early speculative thought both have obvious merits in terms of their intelligibility, their simplicity and (in the case of those based on opposites, particularly) their apparent comprehensiveness (...). What is, however, generally lacking in science at this period, and indeed for many centuries to come, is the present-day conception of the close and special relation between theory and empirical data.*' (p.437).

If one tries to conceive the same subject through another perspective, one should recognize an abstract, transformable multiplicity, which includes all sorts of 'opposites' or 'analogies' depending upon the *naming* chosen. Thus, we could ascertain from Lloyd's work that the use of opposites as a mode of thought and analysis is mainly developed by Aristotle. What is certain is that there is not enough argumentation to support the view that 5th century classical thought and perception used such a system of analysis to understand space or, moreover, theatrical space.

⁷³ WILES D., *TA* p.160.

objection to them as 'real' relationships just as before and after the performance. Our quarrel is as to whether these were in fact contemporary categories which organised the dramatic experience of the space of the stage in an important way. As the argument of this thesis will try to show, we are indeed concerned to identify those conventions which govern the organisation of the stage and the intelligibility of those conventions from the point of view of the audience. But in order to read and decode the organisation of the different visual images which consist of what he calls 'a unified' space (theatrical space), Wiles uses a contemporary vocabulary of spatial terms which has the effect again of dividing the space of classical drama into different parts as indeed all other scholars we have examined have done. However, this ambiguity is not so pronounced in his central argument about the importance of the centre and periphery in 5th century drama, which is mainly historically based. He presents us with the reasons that make him believe "*...that spatial practices were organised not upon notions of depth, but upon the relationship between the centre of the circle and the periphery*".⁷⁴ To support his argument he analyses the notion of the centre-hearth in Mycenaean houses and the role of the centre and periphery in the *polis* of Athens and concludes that the orchestra is the strongest part of the acting area. This argument is related to the importance he gives to the chorus in relation to the actors. What he is really doing is to attack the significance which has traditionally been given to the central door of the *Skene* as the focal point of attention. The correspondence between space and text is developed chiefly in his chapter: '*The mimetic action of the chorus*', where he focuses on the choreography of the choral songs.⁷⁵ Wiles analyses the structure of the choral songs and its possible

⁷⁴ WILES D., *TA*, p. 66.

⁷⁵ '*Strophe and antistrophe are metrically identical yet within the whole of Greek Tragedy no two strophes are alike (...) It is inconceivable that the tragedians would have taken such trouble to create subtle responses in the text, if they were not concerned to make the symmetry*

choreographed representation in the orchestra, underlining that tragic dance was distinct from all other types of dance in the sense that it '*... shows a gradual change of emphasis towards frontal representation*'⁷⁶. He then examines the chorus's transformations during the course of different tragedies, in an attempt to grasp the correspondence of 'choreography' to the structure of the text. Ultimately he uses the text of the play as the main source of information about the spatial transformations, without examining the reverse - how the space of drama could have determined the text of performance. We believe that what Wiles asserts about the choral songs could be applied also to the dialogic parts of the tragedies. Even if the chorus is decisive for the organisation of the stage because of its size and its position in the main acting area, the orchestra, it is the main characters of the play who bear the most important semantic load, realised on the stage through their speech. Actors may seem to lack the scale of the chorus's number and dance, but one should not forget that it is through their speech that the plot is set and the performance space is 'directed'. Later in this thesis we will argue that the structure of the performance space corresponds to the structure of the poetic text as uttered by the main characters.⁷⁷

What makes Wiles' approach different from any other is his attempt to grasp theatrical space not as a stable system but as a constantly transforming system. He draws upon a large corpus of evidence and substantiates his arguments through

apparent to the spectators in the theatre. As Kitto puts it, repetition was conceived by the dramatist 'not only orally, but visually and spatially as well.' He continues '*...the relationship of strophe and antistrophe is precisely one of transformation, for a visual image seen one way in the strophe is seen a different way thanks to the different words in the antistrophe. Stage objects, parts of the performance space, and the bodies of the dancers are all available to be transformed and reinterpreted. We must not conceive the choral odes as poetry enhanced or illustrated by rhythmic movement, but rather as a sequence of visual images interpreted by words.*' WILES D., *TA*, p.96.

⁷⁶ WILES D., *TA*, p.96.

⁷⁷ See: 4.2 Verbal and built constructions during performance, p. 154-159,

specific practices. His positions are clear: Firstly the space of the theatre has to be conceived in relation to the broader social-political-religious site. Secondly the structure of the space is revealed through the analysis of binary polarities and each of these binary parameters is examined in its relation to public space. For example for him the notion of 'centre' for the Athenian spectator bears a meaning which transcends its position in the theatre and refers to the centre of the *polis*, the centre of the *oikos*, etc. He uses a contemporary mode of analysis of divisions to 'read' and decode the shapes of this moving, undefined space, theatrical space. Even if we disagree with his use of polarities his work leads us to grasp the complexities of theatrical space by revealing a network of non-obvious correspondences. He expands our perception of theatrical space while he leaves undefined its exterior or interior limits, arguing for a complex space rich in meanings.

L. Edmunds's book *'Theatrical Space and Historical Place in Sophocles' 'Oedipus at Colonus'* provides another approach to the subject. He attempts a semiotic reading of *Oedipus at Colonus*, concentrating mainly on theatrical space. In the conclusion of his book he argues that '*his reading discovered a high degree of metatheatre in the tragedy, which had the effect of putting dramatic representation into question.*'⁷⁸ His

⁷⁸ The application of the notion of 'metatheatre' to classical drama had already been criticised by O. Taplin, who argued that "*in the case of Greek tragedy metatheatricality has seemed to be precluded because it would break the spell that tragedy must cast if it is to have its proper effect*" (Taplin 1986, See also critique of Wiles 1987). Edmunds is concerned with the application of two main concepts, that of 'intertextuality' (*...a form of reference to earlier works*) and that of 'metatheatre' (metatheatricality consists the cross-reference of different theatrical signs) in Greek tragedy. He argues that these two concepts are interconnected with the Derridean notion of Difference. '*The historical aspect of difference provides a way of bringing together two phenomena that have heretofore been unconnected in the discussion of Oedipus, intertextuality and metatheatre*' (p.152). Derrida's essay becomes the basic tool of his reading as he will attempt to prove that in theatre the two senses of Difference (*Difference as temporisation, difference as spacing*) are joined together to produce the '*becoming - space of time or the becoming time of space*' (p.152). Eventually he will conclude that his attempt to find a new Derridean reading of the aspects of tragedy, in time and space, '*establishes the*

main concerns, formulated in the introduction of his book, relate to the issue of the identity of the subject and the problem of anachronism. He explains that his reading of the tragedy is a historical one '*...oriented to what an ancient spectator might have seen...*'⁷⁹ but at the same time he is concerned about its meaning for the modern spectator or reader. He then criticises Taplin's⁸⁰ point about Nicole Loraux's article which he takes as representative of the classicists. '*...For the classicist interpreter of Greek tragedy, the problem of the bridge between the present and the past does not arise. But the notion of 'rejecting the appropriation of the ancient Greek dramas by our present prejudices' directly confronts one of the largest concerns of contemporary critical theory.*'⁸¹ This issue of setting the relation of past and present interpretation within a single horizon is the traditional problem for hermeneutics - a discipline originally designed to integrate historical meanings of the Bible with contemporary understandings without the one violating the other. This problem seems to us, by contrast, to belong to the philosophy of history and therefore quite outside the scope of this thesis. What is perhaps more relevant is how this hermeneutic question affects Edmunds' handling of theatrical space. If the hermeneutic interpretation of theatrical space somehow combines the apparently different specialities of Greek theatre and of modern production, their unity has come about through a speculation about history rather than about space. We might reflect that one problem evident in his book but

probability that a 5th century concept of the sign very close to the one that, on the basis of Derrida, he has been exposing in *Oedipus* was indeed available'.

⁷⁹ EDMUNDS L., *Theatrical Space and Historical Place in Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus*.

⁸⁰ TAPLIN O., *Drastic Celebrations* (review of Winkler and Zeitlin, 1990) *TLS* July 13-19, 1990, p.759.

⁸¹ EDMUNDS L., *Theatrical Space and Historical Place in Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus*, p.6.

On the other hand there is the view of Kitto who "*spoke of the difference in the questions put to a play, by its original audience and by the present generation*" and then that of Gadamer who argued that '*... the reconstructed historical question is already included within the horizon of the present. Therefore understanding is a 'fusion of horizons', of the horizon of the past and the horizon of the present*'. (Edmunds, 1996, p.7).

perhaps more generally true is that our culture tends to favour the issue of time rather than space as the register for marking both identity and difference within the cultural sphere. This matter becomes more clear when we consider his declaration concerning semantics that '*Theatrical signs are signs of signs.*' Edmunds dedicates his Chapter One to asserting that '*the semantic value of the theatrical signs is a transaction between their pre-given meaning in their historical cultural context and their new meaning in the context of theatre, which rebuilds codes and resemanticizes signs, which thus become signs of signs.*'⁸²

This argument does not persuade us since it rests upon a philosophical notion of history, one best articulated by Hegel,⁸³ that historical development preserves the past. It seems to us by contrast that this is a way of evading rather than solving the real problem which is *anachronism*. This is compounded by the final move of his argument which reduces the problem of anachronism to a phenomenon within tragedy. He remarks upon '*anachronism's semiotic effect in defining relations among stage, orchestra, and audience, and once noticing its contribution to a metatheatrical effect*'. In fact he accepts anachronism as a common phenomenon within Greek tragedy, '*a poetic device like any of the others the tragedians had at their disposal and must therefore be interpreted as such*' (Easterling, 1985). It is as if he is claiming that since anachronism exists as a poetic device within the tragedies, subsequent anachronisms in the work of historians have these as their precedents. Perhaps Edmunds' argument makes more sense in terms of the intersection of history and aesthetics (how the works of the past have a contemporary aesthetic value), but his approach does not help in the reconstruction of the rules and conventions which

⁸² EDMUNDS L., 1996: *Theatrical Space and Historical Place in Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus*, p.23

dictated the invention of Greek tragedy. Moreover his comments on semiotics retard the analysis at a point which we will discuss below in the text.⁸⁴ Edmunds attempts to juxtapose the act of reading against the act of performance. By trying to foreground performance and to avoid relapsing into a purely textual context of reading, in effect, he supports the idea of linguistics of speech rather than the reduction of speech to the signifying code of language. *'Reading, based on theatrical semiotics would be especially attentive to 'instances of discourse' demonstrative pronouns, particles, the relation of utterance to the physical position, (...) and the relation of stage space to space off stage'.* He concludes that *'reading and performance can now legitimately be used as mutual metaphors. Reading is performance and performance is reading'.*⁸⁵ His position on the issue of the relation of the two sign systems, the verbal and the spatial, accords with the general position of the semiotics of theatre in that it is impossible to discern any dominance between them. Even if the language of everyday life seems to be the dominant sign system in the theatre, it *'.. is relativised as it is thrown into relation with other sign systems that cause its status as a sign system to lose its naturalness and self-evidence and to become an aspect of the spectacle.'*⁸⁶ As we have seen above, for Edmunds, 'reading' based upon a theatrical semiotics would be especially attentive i) to those instances of discourse such as 'pronouns', 'particles' ii) to the relation of utterance to the physical position of actors and finally iii) to the relation of the 'stage space' to the space 'off the stage'. We can see that without these extensions to the idea of speech, his position would collapse back into the textual. But the paradox is this that these discursive extensions, in which gesture

⁸³ See HEGEL G.D.F. *Lectures on the philosophy of History*, tr. by SIBREE J.

⁸⁴ See the problems of what we call 'the naturalistic fallacy', p. 97-102.

⁸⁵ EDMUNDS L., 1996: *Theatrical Space and Historical Place in Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus*, p.3.

⁸⁶ EDMUNDS L., *Theatrical Space and Historical Place in Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus*, p.3.

and physical location have an equality with speech in terms of being the signs of performance are drawn essentially from common sense. They are, as it were, a practical recognition that speech always supplements itself in daily life with these gestural and physical signs. This is, of course true but what it does not tell us anything about is the system of conventions that governed Greek tragedy as opposed to everyday life. Consequently, his assertion that the verbal and the spatial sign systems have an equivalence may be a rejection of the priority of the text but only on the basis of the performance of everyday life. His idea of the spectacle thus remains gestural.

In this introductory chapter to the thesis, we have attempted to present a selection of contemporary scholarship on the issue of space in classical drama. Since it was impossible to analyse all the different approaches of existing scholarship, it was decided to categorise each of the studies, although the citing was not so obvious. Also, it was often the case that one and the same study belonged to more than one categories. In general our presentation is historical, in the sense that it starts from the poetic texts that have been produced after the rediscovery of classical tragedy during the Renaissance and ends with modern critical approaches of scholars from different disciplines. We have seen that even if some of the early works were concerned to present elements of the theatre building or the performance, earlier scholarship was mainly interested in the interpretation of the texts of the surviving tragedies rather than the conditions of their representation on stage. In this sense and despite their differences we placed in the same category all the scholars involved in classical philological scholarship. We also saw how the development of different theoretical movements of the twentieth century, semiotics, structuralism, deconstruction, have all influenced classical scholarship, producing a new corpus of work which according to

Goldhill consists of 'modern classical studies'. We have been able to see, through the brief presentation of some of the most characteristic studies, how different they appear to be but how similar in some sense they are in their methodological approach or in their conclusions. Certainly they all show a shift of interest to the importance of the performance, often through the analysis of the theatrical space, and therefore in our thesis they all belong to the same broad category.

Our presentation of the works of existing scholarship has been brief, and we have rarely attempted an overall critique. For us what was important was to discern why and how the works have been influential, and what their contribution to the subject has been. It is true that although all these different approaches are valuable in revealing different aspects of classical drama, it has been difficult to discern in any of them what we called in our introduction a 'synchronic' account of the dramatic conventions of tragedy. If our review of these texts may have seemed excessively negative, we should perhaps insist that we are not contesting the literature in all aspects. We are concerned with a single strand which is the topic of this thesis. It is nonetheless a topic which is difficult to formulate since to speak of 'the representation of space in Greek tragedy' is not quite what we are concerned with. We are concerned with Greek tragedy as a totality of spatial conventions which provide the conditions of existence of the tragedy. In the chapters which follow we attempt to trace those spatial conventions through the investigation of the different elements of drama, in order to explore their interrelation with the texts in the formation of drama itself.

CHAPTER 2

The elements of drama

The main characters of drama: Poet, actors, chorus, audience

There is a tendency for writings on drama to assume that it is made up of a number of self-evident elements. These will include a text, an author, actors and an audience.

An audit of these elements can become as detailed as to include the title of the play. Perhaps there is an assumption that there is a 'director' who is assisted to provide all the necessary conditions of a 'production'. It is as if these are natural and inevitable elements of theatrical drama which proceed from the nature of drama itself. In fact this is nothing less than an anachronistic and retrospective projection on to Greek drama of the organisation of European 19th and 20th century drama. It is as ahistorical as asking about the Greek equivalent to a stage manager or the manager of the box office. Greek drama was formed out of a quite different distribution of functions and they corresponded only to the specific Greek organisation of drama. The very nature of the performance occupied a quite different cultural place from the modern production of a theatrical spectacle for a paying audience as a form of consumption. Even if we were to speak of an author, or an actor or an audience we must not assume that they are simply translations of the same functions that can be observed now. In order to attempt to determine fully the content of these categories, they must be reconstructed in the light of their contemporary Greek associations using whatever historical evidence is available. Although we may not resolve the nature of these rules, they can be clarified.

The issue of the formation of the meaning and experience of space will remain central to our research. But this issue of space will always be concentrated by the relations it develops with the rest of the elements. An investigation into the nature of the categories of 'actors', 'chorus' and 'audience' and of the relations between them will permit us to make some hypothesis about the way theatrical space was formed. We will argue that the internal structure of the 5th century theatre building mainly and merely reflects the relations of those categories as they were formed in the course of the history of 5th century dramaturgy. But before dealing with the role of the characters of the performance itself, we need to deal with the importance of the role of the poet (the 'maker' of drama).

2.1 The poet of tragedy-ποιητής

The role and the status of the poet of tragedy in antiquity has no direct relation to our contemporary sense of the roles of the author or director of a performance. One of the main reasons to investigate the role of the poet is to understand how decisive he was for the production not only of the play itself but also of the rest of the components of drama, of the performance as a whole and as a consequence of the theatrical space.

The poet was commissioned by the *archon* to compose his work for a special reason: to participate in the drama contests of the City Dionysia. *'The criteria for selection remain somewhat obscure. It appears that a poet could be excluded if he made a poor showing at the previous festival, but factors other than quality control clearly came*

*into play and in the Hellenistic period we hear of direct political censorship.*⁸⁷

Every year from 534 BC, each of the three chosen tragic poets, was commissioned by the *archon eponymous* of Athens, to produce three-tragedies and one satyric drama⁸⁸ in order to compete in the major festival of Athens, the Great Dionysia. Poets (as well as actors and *choregoi*⁸⁹) were commemorated on *stelai*, which were erected in the theatre not only for their victory but also for their participation in the drama festivals.

As drama was regarded as the highest form of art in the 5th century, and certainly the most popular⁹⁰, the poet was a distinguished citizen of Athens. Paul Cartledge writes that that playwrights' services '*...were remunerated from public funds*'⁹¹. The evidence we have shows that this income was not substantial and the poet often had to have additional incomes from different sources. The payment of the poet seems to have been more a kind of a minor 'obligation' of the *polis* in order for the poet to continue his work than a form of a special recognition expressed financially.

⁸⁷ CSAPO E., & SLATER W., *The context of ancient drama*, p. 105.

⁸⁸ 'Throughout the fifth century BC. and probably apart from a few exceptional years, through the earlier part of the 4th century also, each tragic poet who entered the contest for the prize in tragedy presented four plays, of which the fourth was normally a satyric play', CAMBRIDGE P., *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, p.80.

⁸⁹ Of equivalent importance with the poet but with completely different duties as to the performance was the drama *choregos*. He was the one who was honoured by the *polis* to pay for all of the expenses of the performance plus a salary for the members of the chorus and the *avlos* player, during the rehearsal period. The *choregoi* were selected each year and they were the financial producers for the Festival. They were wealthy individuals, eight in total, which means that they were one for each of the tragedians (three tragedians: three tragedies and one satyr play each) and the comedians (five comedians: one single comedy each). The evidence we have is not enough to conclude how important the *choregos* was for the final result of the performance. We do not know for example if, as the financial patron, he had just to serve the poet's requirements or if he had the right to negotiate about the expenses with the poet. The successful *choregos* won a symbolic prize: a goat to sacrifice for the tragic *choregos*, a basket of figs and a skin full of wine for the comic *choregos*. See CSAPO & SLATER, *The context of ancient drama*, p. 139- 157.

⁹⁰ 'Drama at Athens was an outstandingly ... successful medium, widely imitated in other cities, particularly from the late fifth century onwards: naturally enough as its prestige grew so did the scope for professionalism, and this must have been one of the factors that contributed to rapid change.' EASTERLING P. E., *Form and Performance*, CCGD

⁹¹ CARTLEDGE PAUL; 'Deep plays': *theatre as process in Greek civic life*, CCGD, p.18

Although it seems surprising to us that so important a citizen did not have any substantial financial assistance from the state, it shows that a monetary award or any other financial arrangement such as a permanent salary, is a more contemporary honour than a 5th century one. On the presumption that the first and highest responsibility of the Athenian citizen was to 'serve' his *polis*, the work of a poet was considered to be his service to Athens.⁹² To be a poet was to make a contribution as a citizen, by elevating the idea of a citizen. This is almost the opposite of the idea of the modern artist who it is thought must be free from obedience to any political or social systems - 'a citizen of the world'.

The relationship of the author to performance was much closer and more important than in modern drama. The poet (*ποιητής*) was not only responsible just for the text but for all components of the performance. He was the composer of the music, which was played by the *aulos* player and sung by the chorus. He was even most probably, at least until 449 BC (the date of the institution of the actor's prize) one of the actors. He was responsible for the costumes and the masks as also for the set, which means that he collaborated with craftsmen.⁹³ The poet in classical drama not only wrote the

⁹² The distinguished meaning that the role of a citizen had in the 5th century is proved by the case of the epitaph of Aeschylus at Gela, where all that is mentioned is his participation in the Persian Wars, and not his identity as a dramatic poet.

'At Gela, rich in wheat, he died, and lies beneath this stone:

Aeschylus the Athenian, son of Euphorion.

His valor, tried and proved, the mead of Marathon can tell,

The long-haired Persian also, who knows it all too well.'

The absence of any reference to Aeschylus's famous art has made a lot of scholars sceptical about the identity of the epitaph. Even so it seems that the epitaph is in accordance with the whole hierarchy of honour of an Athenian citizen whose highest achievement in life was to serve his *polis* by fighting for it. See SOMMERSTEIN ALAN H., *Aeschylean Tragedy*, p. 24.

⁹³ Although we do not have any direct evidence for the use of design as a medium of communication between the craftsman and the 'client', who in our case is the tragedian, we do know that some painters were in close collaboration with poets for the production of the painted scenes in front of the *skene*. There is evidence of the close contact of Sophocles with Polygnotos, one of the most famous mural painters of Athens in the 5th century (see

text, but taught it (*didaskein*) to the actors and the chorus. There is no break in Greek theatre between the composition of the tragedy and the teaching of the tragedy. Or rather one could say, the composition of the tragedy ‘includes’ the teaching of the tragedy. This is not to say that the author simply functioned as a modern director as well. For the very notion of contemporary ‘direction’ was alien to Greek theatre; rather the poet taught his play to the actors and chorus and the affiliation here is to pedagogy. Indeed the pedagogical role of the poet went beyond teaching (*didaskalia*) the actors and chorus and extended to teaching the whole Athenian body of citizens; the audience. It is, then, important to realise the ‘*tragedians’ public pedagogical function as civic teachers*’⁹⁴. It is also important to note that originally the poet was not mainly associated with the writing of the text, but with the whole activity of ‘making’ the drama. The Greek word ‘ποιητής’, used of the poet, means ‘*the one who makes, the maker*’⁹⁵. This word has the same origin as the verb ‘ποιέω’ which means: make, execute, produce, especially works of art.’⁹⁶. Rehm notes the fact that ‘*The list of victors was called the didaskaliai, indicating that the prizes were given for directing and not for writing. In the early days of the theatre, therefore, a play was conceived more in terms of its production than as an artistic creation on its own.*’⁹⁷

As we believe that the text was composed at the same time as the rest of the components of tragedy, nothing indicates that had a separate importance. The view

TRENDALL A. D., and WEBSTER T.B.L., *Illustrations of Greek Drama*, p.4, 66, 69) as also of Aeschylus with Agatharchus. The evolution of the large scale painting and the exploration of the possibilities of perspective design brought the painters closer to the tragedians, who as Ruth Padel notes ‘*satisfy a common desire: to portray human figures with feigned depth, set ambiguously, in complex spatial and emotional relationships, within a large-scale frame...The stage became the most public space to see the new technique, the painting of architecture in recession*’ (PADEL R., *Making Space Speak*, NDD, p.352.)

⁹⁴ See the article of CARTLEDGE P., *Deep plays: theatre as process in Greek civic life*, *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, ed.: P.E.EASTERLING, where he argues the pedagogical role of the tragedies.

⁹⁵ LIDDELL & SCOTT, *Greek Lexicon*, p.566

⁹⁶ LIDDELL & SCOTT, *Greek Lexicon*, p.568

that the text is the 'first material' from which every other part of the performance derives, is more than anachronistic; it is totally misleading.⁹⁸

An important factor in understanding the production of tragedies and the role of the poet is through the issue of the possible use of writing as a mode of their composition. If we accept that the text was composed in its first stage and before its teaching to the actors- chorus in a written form, then we should accept that we are dealing with the introduction of a new category of composed text, a text which can not be used in the same sense any other performance text. The text of tragedy seems to present a completeness as a composition which is based on the special rules of dramatic poetry and obeys a certain narrative model. Even though we should note again that '*Most of what was performed on the orchestra resulted from the give and take between the tragedian and his chorus, with the aulos - playing accompanist making his contribution as well... It is probable that the dramatist viewed his original script as a starting point, and then spent the early rehearsals adjusting the play to the performers...*'⁹⁹ Yet despite its apparent completeness, even the final form of this text is always in-complete (*a-teles*) until its performance on stage. It becomes complete only as part of a whole complex institution which demands the co-existence of different means of expression, such as the verbal, the visual, or the spatial.¹⁰⁰ The above statement is partly true and partly false. It is true because, as we believe, the text only acquires its full realization only in performance. It is false in the sense that

⁹⁷ REHM R., *Greek Tragic Theatre*, p. 25

⁹⁸ Even in modern times the play cannot be conceived by the playwright independently of its performance. It is the nature of the theatre as an art form which presupposes such a multi-dimensional compositional ability. The later gradual division of the different roles of the ancient poet (author, choreographer, designer, musician) is related to the evolution of drama itself

⁹⁹ REHM R., *Greek Tragic Theatre*, p.26.

¹⁰⁰ On this point we agree with Anne Ubersfeld, who argues ('*Lire le theatre*', Paris, 1982)

as it is not transformable by performance, but is a stable, and thus 'completed', element. The evidence that we have leads us to believe that there is an original 'script' which may be transformed during rehearsals but where a final text is stabilised and probably written before its first performance on stage. We should underline here that the fact that there was a fixed text before performance is a new and revolutionary idea. The use of writing becomes thus a crucial difference between drama and the existing performance tradition. One of the results of its use is the difference of time between the moment the text is created and the moment it is performed. This is a gap of time which never existed before. Segal notes: *'As the creator of a written text destined for oral performance, the tragic poet, unlike the oral singer, stands in a deferred relation to his work. Composition and performance no longer coincide; instead there is an intermediate stage when the work is complete but unrealised'*.¹⁰¹

To understand the significance of the above we should attempt to clarify the differences between drama and oral poetry.

Both dramatic poetry and oral poetry were performed. The Greeks had developed a tradition of oral poetry as a special category of performance. Homeric epics belong to this category. Here different scholars agree that the text was not stable but used a basic narrative framework, and was reproduced each time under certain performative rules. In oral poetry, the various types of metres were associated with different sorts of effects and the Rhapsode used them in order to fulfil the demand of the performance. Even if we argue that oral poetry was not composed in writing, there is enough evidence to conclude that early Greek literature (mainly lyric poetry) used writing and the issue is *'when these early poets began to write down their works, and*

that the text needs to be regarded always as *'an incomplete document'*.

¹⁰¹ SEGAL CH., *Interpreting Greek Tragedy, Myth, Poetry, Text*, p.65.

how far they improvised by performance'.¹⁰² We must also understand that performance was traditionally one of the main media of competition of Greek poetry. The performance of the poetic text was not simply the hearing of the text. *'There were a wide variety of modes of performance, from the recitation of the rhapsode, to the rhetorical performances of orators who strove to give the impression of improvisation, or the 'readings' attributed to historians like Herodotus. Most important,..., is that a large proportion of poetry was accompanied by music - and even dancing- as an integral part of the experience'*.¹⁰³ We do realise that there is a tradition in the way a poetic text is composed which is based both on performance and writing, even if the latter seems not to be so important until the appearance of drama. The transition from the oral to the written is accompanied by a gradual interest in the *'the expression of individual feeling and views'*.¹⁰⁴ Tragedies may not be the first written text for performance, but we believe they differ from all other performative texts before in their singular way of being completed during rehearsals and stabilised by writing before their first and original performance.

What we would like to underline is that with the introduction of writing creates the new rules of composition. The form is relieved of all those functions 'metre' played, as a device of memory and performance. In the case of tragedy as it was constituted by the end of the 6th century, the relation between 'performance' and text takes a new form: performance was now of a stable text composed before its enactment on the

¹⁰² THOMAS R., *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece*, p.102.

¹⁰³ THOMAS R., *Literacy and Orality in Ancient Greece*, p.117.

¹⁰⁴ Thomas explains; *'The coming of literacy has also been linked with a change in mentality, reflected again in the grand sweep of Greek literature: the oral gives way to the literate at least by the time of Plato in the fourth century. In this scheme, Homer represents the anonymous oral epic, (...) lacking in a sense of poetic individuality or creativity. Hesiod's didactic poetry shows more sign of the self, (...). The flowering (...), tends to develop a sense of the individual and the individual artist.'* , THOMAS R., *Literacy and Orality in Ancient*

stage and so had a different meaning for the audience from previous types of performance. The enormous oral tradition had built up the ways of composing, learning and transmitting poetry from generation to generation. The introduction of writing and reading was for the Athenians what we might call 'new technology' which could have never been assimilated and digested automatically. Poets used writing as a medium to compose and then teach the complex performance which this new genre-drama exhibited. *'Greek drama has been written about from different critical standpoints, literary, philosophical, psychological, but all presupposing that there is an art form which is autonomous, called into existence solely by the creative energies of its authors'*¹⁰⁵ Segal is one of the scholars who emphasises the importance of writing as a condition of the composition of tragedy. He argues that *'the role of writing becomes decisive in composition, for tragedy implies a written text, necessary to organise its dense, compact, multimedia performance (dance, music, dialogue, recitation, etc.). Indeed, it is possible that the increasing importance of writing in the still largely oral culture of the early fifth century BC may have been one of the determinants in the origin of tragedy. The intersection of a literate and an oral culture results in the crossing between two semantic systems and a resultant complexity in the nature of mythic representation.'*¹⁰⁶ In considering the importance of writing in the composition of tragedy, it is important to refer to its general status in antiquity. Therefore we shall insert a short parenthesis, in order to refer to the evolution of writing and the transition of Athenian society from orality to literacy. This transition is an important subject for understanding all modes of poetry in Greece, and has been investigated by different scholars. Havelock says : 'A

Greece, p. 102-103.

¹⁰⁵ HAVELOCK, ER. A., *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, p.266.

¹⁰⁶ SEGAL CH., *Interpreting Greek Tragedy, Myth, Poetry, Text*, p.77.

conservative estimate would conclude that a condition of general literacy came about in Athens in the last third of the fifth century BC, at the close of the Periclean age but not before that.'¹⁰⁷ Tragedy '... develops in Greece at the point of intersection between oral and literate modes of narration and representation. Although writing in Greece existed in early times, earlier narration was primarily oral and audience controlled.'¹⁰⁸ Writing increasingly became the vehicle for innovative and analytic thought. When Vernant analyses the phenomenon of writing in its social and political context he underlines that '*In the kingdoms of the Near East, writing was the privilege and speciality of scribes (...) and 'enabled the royal administration to control the economic and social life of the State by keeping records of it', while in Athens and possibly in the rest of Greece '...writing becomes the 'common property' of all citizens, an instrument of publicity... The consequences of this change in the social status of writing will be fundamental for intellectual history'*'.¹⁰⁹

The *polis* of Athens used writing mainly for administrative purposes. Although the social and political meaning of drama is stated by the official records of the Festival kept every year, there is no reference to the recording of the tragedies¹¹⁰ (until the

¹⁰⁷ HAVELOCK, ER. A., *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, Princeton University Press, 1982, p.42 and 262. '*The Greeks between 1100 and 700 BC were totally non-literate: the evidence of epigraphy on this point is now irrefutable. Yet it was precisely in these centuries that Greece invented the first forms of that social organisation and artistic achievement which became her glory (...) What evidence there is – a considerable body – is indirect.*

¹⁰⁸ SEGAL CH., *Interpreting Greek Tragedy, Myth, Poetry, Text*, p.77.

¹⁰⁹ J.P. VERNANT, *Myth et Pensee*, p.151-52 as it is quoted by DERRIDA J., in *Dissemination*, p. 144.

¹¹⁰ Page argues that we do have recording of the texts even by the second half of the fifth century for the purposes of reading. He explains that a final stable version of the text had to be given after the end of the rehearsals to the prompter (?). Then the prompter himself sent this copy to the publisher and the '*publisher dictated the text of the prompt-copy (to the actor recited his part) to an assembly of slaves; thus many copies were made simultaneously*' (See PAGE D.L., *Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy*, p. 115.) As he gives no evidence for the above it is difficult for us to conclude whether he is right or if the above description is an anachronistic attempt to argue about the possible circulation of the plays for reading.

Lycurgus years as we will see below). Writing, which is not only a method of composition but also a method of conservation, gave tragedy the possibility of becoming a 'historical object' independent of the other components of drama. And if tragedies could be 'conserved' as written texts they could also be read by the public. If, as Page informs us, texts of the tragedians became by the second half of the 5th century the first books in Hellas,¹¹¹ then they should be considered as the basic and stable source of education and speculation for the citizen.

There is not enough evidence to establish when the original manuscript started to be considered as a record that had to be 'conserved'. However the phenomenon of new productions of already performed tragedies, is a fact even by the 5th century. If the new production was staged by the poet himself for a city other than the Dionysia festival, (for example in the rural Dionysia Festival, or the *Lenaia*), we can assume that the 'original' text and the 'original' performance were more or less kept. We know that up to the 5th century tragedies were commissioned for immediate performance. But when from 386 BC onwards a production of an 'old tragedy' had to be included at the Festival, the first questions about the originality of the texts emerged. In those productions, which included the plays of Sophocles and Euripides, *'the text was liable to be tampered with by the actors who produced them, so that Lycurgus passed a law to check this practice'*¹¹². It was in 4th century that Lycurgus organized an archive of the texts of the three tragedians and it is mainly to him that we owe the survival of the tragedies. Even though *'His law did not have a permanent effect. The Alexandrian scholars knew well enough that their criticism must be based on collations of histrionically distorted texts, not on a single diplomatic*

¹¹¹ PAGE D.L., *Actors' Interpolations in Greek Tragedy*, p.1.

¹¹² PICKARD-CAMBRIDGE., *Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, p.100.

archetype... So far the history of the text from Euripides to the Alexandrians is dimly comprehended: frequent interpolations by actors, frequent republications of the booksellers who incorporated the actors' alterations'.¹¹³ Until the period of Lycurgus there is also no evidence about the conservation of the texts on the part of the *polis*. The only official records about the performances in the 5th century were kept by the *archon*. Those records included the titles of the tragedies and comedies which were included that year in the Dionysia, together with the names of the *archon*, the names of the poets in order of success, and the names of the protagonist of each of the plays.¹¹⁴ The *archon* did not keep any other record as, for example, the 'script' or the music of a tragedy. It is indicative that when Lycurgus wanted to establish an archive with the official texts of the three great fifth-century tragedians for future revivals, '...it was to Astydamas, as the heir of Aeschylus, that he turned for copies of Aeschylus scripts. If so, it is to Astydamas that we owe the preservation of no small part of what remains of Aeschylean drama.'¹¹⁵ Nothing indicates any intention on the part of the state to 'possess' or 'conserve' any evidence from original performances, during the 5th century BC. That may mean that none of those elements of the performance which could be conserved were considered capable of 'preserving' the meaning of the performance. It is obvious that for Athenians the elements of drama (text, music, dance, and imagery), were ephemeral. Drama was (it still is) an ephemeral form of art and each performance was considered a unique event. By the time there was an intention to conserve 'elements' of a performance the first element

¹¹³ PAGE D.L., *Actors Interpolations in Greek Tragedy*, p:2, See also Wilamowitz, *Einleitung in die griechische Tragödie*, Kap. 3, on which Page's chapter is based.

¹¹⁴ There are four different types of inscriptional information about the two major festivals, the Dionysia and the Lenaea : The *Fasti*, the *Didascaliai*, the *Victor lists*, and the *Roman Fasti*. See Csapo & Slater, *The context of Ancient Drama*, p. 39-40. About the records of the festivals and the evidence surviving today see also PICKARD- CAMBRIDGE., *Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, p.70-74.

¹¹⁵ SOMMERSTEIN ALAN H., *Aeschylean Tragedy*, p.32.

was the text. But if the text had been considered the primary element of drama, the one from which any others derived, it would have been conserved earlier in the history of drama, especially as the medium -writing- and its conservation was already established in other arenas. Obviously the text was not perceived to have greater importance than other components of drama. The idea that the plot - the organisation of the events- is logically prior as well as coming before performance, emerges later and is first manifested in Aristotle's *Poetics*.¹¹⁶ It is only since then that the term poet: '*poietes*' is gradually identified more with the composing of the text than with the 'production' of the whole of the performance and the text becomes the dominant element of drama.¹¹⁷

2.2 Actors-chorus-audience

2.2.1 A process of differentiation and its reflection on space

This part of the thesis deals with three different but related subjects: the process of the gradual differentiation between the main participants of drama, the roles and characteristics that those participants acquire as tragedy develops and, finally, the formation of the theatre building as a result of the above relationships.

Taking the last topic first, we would like to clarify our approach to the theatre building itself. We will argue that the theatre building's basic function is the realisation of the series of internal relations that had developed gradually as tragedy stabilised itself as a new form of performance. What might have been expected from a

¹¹⁶ HUTTON J., *Aristotle's Poetics*, p.51. '*... for every drama has spectacle, character, plot, language, melody and though in the same sense, but the most important of them is the organization of the events (the plot).*'

¹¹⁷ HUTTON J., *Aristotle's Poetics*, p. 52 '*...for tragedy fulfills its function even without a*

thesis which dealt with theatrical space is an analytical presentation of all the archaeological and other evidence about theatre buildings and especially about the theatre of Dionysus Eleuthereus in Athens, where tragedies were first performed. D. Wiles, in order '*to understand how the Athenians would have conceived a space for theatrical performance*', gives us in chapter 2 of '*Tragedy in Athens*'¹¹⁸ a full account of the architectural record, starting from the different theatres of the *demes* of Athens of the 5th century BC and the theatres of the fourth century, looking '*for evidence not of spaces, but of spatial practices*'. His approach, one of the most interesting and complete, reveals through different examples the relation of the theatre buildings to the broader surrounding areas and their relevant position beside a number of different sacred buildings. He also succeeds in underlining the special link between the theatre itself and other typical sites as the Agora.¹¹⁹ At the end of the chapter he concludes: '*Greek tragedy was a spatial construct, organised in relation to spatial oppositions that were rich in association for the Greek audience. The texts presuppose performance in a space that was not neutral or 'empty' but semantically laden. The theatrical space was not a mere context of the play; rather the play lent meaning to the space*'.¹²⁰ Wiles also throws light on the ways in which religion or civic order intervened in the way in which the theatre building was organised its parts (orchestra, *skene*, *koilon*) in relation to surrounding buildings. Recent scholarship agrees that theatrical space is a system in constant dialogue with the surrounding area of the city. The location of the theatre building, in the case of the theatre of Dionysus on the south slope of Acropolis in Athens, is not only defined by dynamics in the evolution of drama itself, but also by the importance drama had in the cultural and political

public performance and actors ...'.

¹¹⁸ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens, Performance Space and Theatrical Meaning*, 1997.

See chapter 2, *The Theatre of Dionysus*, p. 23- 62.

¹¹⁹ See the theatre of Rhamnous, p.208

context of the city. The theatre of Dionysus has to be considered as part of a general site which includes the temple to the east-west, the Odeon on the east, the Acropolis on the north and the altar on the south (see p.209). Only later in its Hellenistic state, when the orchestra has shifted westward, did *'the theatral area and the god's sanctuary have become two separate spaces with separate entries.'*¹²¹ Later examples of Hellenistic and Roman theatres shared theatre's 'release' from other religious or social contexts, but in the 5th century, the theatral area was still connected to them and poets 'used' those relations. It is evident from many of surviving tragedies that during the performance the theatre's 'physical' limits were extended beyond the limits of the stage. One of the clearest examples where the performance area was extended beyond the skene wall 'using' elements of the general sacred site is pointed out by Wiles: in *Agamemnon*, (v. 1920- 1312), Cassandra walks through the open door of the skene to enter the palace, where she will be murdered. The audience virtually sees through the open door the place of the sacrifice, the physical altar itself, some metres behind the skene. *'Cassandra compares the skene door to the gates of Hades, approaches the altar meekly like a sacrificial ox, and reels back from the smell of death. Such images are rooted in physical actuality, for the death behind the skene was real, the victim had to acquiesce in death to spare the guilt of his killer, and the smell of the dead animals must have lingered during the days of the performance'*¹²²

Architectural and other evidence prove that in the 5th century there was no grand structure for a theatre building. Even when later in the 4th century theatres become important built elements of the city they were certainly not the products of what we would now call 'architectural design proposals'. We will argue that the theatre

¹²⁰ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.62.

¹²¹ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p 55.

building was itself a materialisation of the organic shapes of drama. This underlines the importance of understanding the conditions of dramatic space, because it seems that historically they and they alone determined the internal arrangements that the 4th century theatre building later materialised. Our interpretation of the theatre building is one which attempts to present how its different parts (orchestra, skene, auditorium) gradually differentiated from each other through their shape, volume or height, reflecting the relations between the different 'participants' (chorus, actors, audience) who came to inhabit them. Historically one could argue that the three categories (actors, chorus and audience) through which we recognise 5th century drama had the same origin in the different rituals and ceremonies which used to be organised in the city of Athens at particular times of the year. Categories of 'performers' and 'spectators' obviously pre-dated the development of tragedy, in the Rhapsodes, the Athletic Games or the different religious rituals in the festivals of the city. But we should be beware of conflating these 'audiences' and treating them all as part of a general process of differentiation. Only in tragedy do we pass from an orchestral form of discourse to the singularity of the discourse which both required and produced a new organisation of space, together with new categories of performers and spectators. If we accept that from the unity of participants in the rituals two new categories derived, those of performers (mainly a body of dancers and singers: a chorus) and spectators, a second division occurred amongst performers, separating the chorus from the actors and generating drama itself. If it is generally accepted that the origin of drama is related to the emergence of the chorus as the main and first body of performers before a 'formal' audience, then the birth of drama would date from the moment when a member of the chorus separated from the rest of the body and

¹²²WILES D., *Theatre in Athens*, p. 59.

delivered a speech. Therefore we consider that it is from the body of the chorus that at some point in the pre-history of drama a new category of performer -the actor- emerged. 'The actor as a conceptual category is posterior to the playing of drama before an audience'.¹²³ There is not enough evidence about the precise date when these 'splits', so crucial for the evolution of drama occurred. Thespis was, according to the traditional sources,¹²⁴ the first who introduced the concept of the actor. But it is tempting to speculate, how this differentiation might have been reflected in space. The evidence confirms that the participants in the different rituals originally shared a single unified open space. Such performance did not require any specially organised space. There would have been an open field for the performers to act, and a convenient place for the spectators to watch. In the Agora, which is considered to be the first place of drama, nothing indicates a formal separation between the acting area and an area for the spectators.¹²⁵ Only later, when drama performances were transferred to the southern slope of the Acropolis did the basic spatial distinctions organise what we today call the theatre, the building. But different examples of the theatres of the *deme* of Athens¹²⁶ allow us to argue that the spectators were considered to have obtained a significant or convenient place for themselves inside the theatrical area. We should not confuse the audience of the drama with audiences in general. The location of the audience of drama was not just an empirical location but was what we might call a symbolic location. Indeed in some cases (as in the

¹²³ SLATER N., *The idea of an actor*, in *NDD*, p.385.

¹²⁴ Aristotle *Rhet*, see also PICKARD CAMBRIDGE: *The Dramatic Festivals*, p. 131, note:3.

¹²⁵ 'In the earliest performances there was no split or distinction between the stage area and the auditorium (this was before the construction of stage or auditorium) nor between the actors and the public. (...) In the archaic period until the end of the sixth century, tragic performances took place in Athens on an orchestra in the Agora; it was only at about the beginning of the fifth century that a theatrical space was arranged on the south slope of the Acropolis :The theatre of Dionysus Eleuthereus'. LONGON ODD., *The Theatre of Polis* in *NDD* p., 16 See also KOLB F., *Agora und Theatre*

¹²⁶ See WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p. 23-36.

theatre of Ikarion, see p.210) it is clear that the dramatic performance was addressed to the one pre-eminent spectator, the god Dionysus.¹²⁷ Even if we assume that the fundamental relation between audience and performers is 'opposite' each other, the audience often surrounded the area of the performance. (See the theatres of the demos Ikarion, Euonymon, and Thoricos, p. 210). We believe that the two sides (performers, audience) should not be read as a physical confrontation for their role and their location rather evidences a scene of mutual interdependence. In this sense of implication audience and performers were both participating and organising one and the same system. The audience saw what was represented during the performance but no longer acted. The two groups co-existed in space and time, if through the form of separation. This point is more important in terms of the history of spatial organisation than at first it might seem. It seems so self evident to us that drama involves a division between performers and spectators, that it is difficult to recapture the strangeness and cultural originality of such a division. This division symbolised the starting point of shaping what we will name theatre building.

The earlier unified space - where wherever one was standing was almost equivalent - was now separated into two sub-spaces (orchestra, koilon) which faced each other, theatre 'building' started to emerge. In the gradual development of this building type we can follow the emergence of a certain spatial code¹²⁸ which was completed by the

¹²⁷ The most striking of the examples is the case of the theatre of Ikarion. See Wiles p.27-29, '....the clear assumption behind the spatial practice of the Ikarians is that their god is the pre-eminent spectator, and humans take second place.' See also EASTERLING P.E., *A show for Dionysus* in CCGD, p. 51 : 'The influential image of Dionysus as performer with his thiasos-leader of the dance, master of disguise, controller of the action-has to be balanced by that of Dionysus as spectator, the supreme 'theates' for whom the shows are put on. This duality suggests that the drama was felt to have power to generate interactive response between players and audience and there may be a significant link here with the way the Dionysiac mysteries functioned'.

¹²⁸ This is the code which among other information reveals the purpose and the origin of the

appearance of the skene building¹²⁹. The orchestra, whatever shape it was,¹³⁰ was between the skene and the koilon and in dialogue with both. The orchestra's place revealed more about the chorus' s relations both with audience and actors: it could be described as a 'filter' but also a 'mirror', a double mirror of the 'action' of the actors and of the 're-action' of the audience.¹³¹ The existence of the skene building, which is more or less certain by the time of the *Oresteia*,¹³² introduced another segregation. The skene is a vertical barrier inside the theatrical area, a wall which isolated the performance area from the sanctuary and the altar. Moreover, it was the barrier which hid unseen events of the performance from the audience. These 'unseen' scenes together with a whole system of exits and entrances through this building (temple, palace, etc.) enriched the theatrical, poetic and visual vocabulary by introducing '*a dialectic of inside and outside*'¹³³. The skene was also the space of the actors. '*In ancient literature, skene often refers to the space in front of the stage building. Those from or on the skene are the people who use that space: actors, not chorus.*'¹³⁴

It is important to recall that this division between chorus' and actors' areas is not

different characters of the plays. We should note here that space in antiquity is always 'signed'. Public spaces in Athens (see the Pnyx for example) display the social hierarchy of the city.

¹²⁹ The Skene usually represented a palace or a temple. There is a strong possibility that Skene could also have had permanently attached to its wall flat panels painted with architecturally shaped columns, a pediment, and roof. At the moment that tragedy acquires its skene, painting finds ways of opening a window on a world that moves away from the watching eye into illusory space. Sophocles is associated at several points with Polygnotus, the great painter of this period. However, Padel argues that is unlikely that the skene loses its architectural background in order to be represented by painted screens. She adds '*Tragedy uses the language of house persistently both to signify the structures and values on which human relationships depend, and as an image for the self.*' See PADEL R., *Making Space Speak*, in *NDD*

¹³⁰ About the shapes of the orchestra and auditorium see WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, ch. 2 *The Theatre of Dionysus*.

¹³¹ We will later describe the roles of the chorus, the actors and the audience during the analysis of the *Oresteia* (See Ch. 4), as a constant situation of 'mirroring', 'reflecting' or 'see- through'.

¹³² See TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, appendix c p. 453 .

¹³³ See PADEL R., *Making space speak*, in *NDD*, p. 336-365. where the skene facade and door is presented as a place of transition.

accepted by all contemporary scholarship. Wiles, for example, argues that there was no such a division: *'The notion that the actors performed (principally) on a stage whilst the chorus performed (principally) in the orchestra is another important twentieth - century chimera.'*¹³⁵ This homogeneous space which Wiles then describes is mainly organised around the relations of the centre of the orchestra and its periphery and less on the axis of the skene door. On the evidence of the plays themselves, we tend to argue that theatrical space is structured by the spatial relations produced by both actors and chorus during performance. Dramatic space has therefore to be considered as the result of the combination of the relations between centre and periphery (chorus) as well as the relations which result from the use of the main axis of skene door which often became the focus of attention during performance. The example of the *Oresteia*, as Wiles himself points out¹³⁶ proves exactly that interest constantly shifts from the centre of the orchestra to the skene door and vice versa. In any case, different examples from the surviving tragedies¹³⁷ indicate that during the 5th century there must have been a close relation of chorus and actors, who, even if they do not act in the same area, easily crossed each other's space in order to co-exist. The later idea that actors should perform from a distinct area (a high raised platform in front of skene building) can only be justified by the different importance actors and chorus acquire during the evolution of drama. *'It is a commonplace that over time, the balance between acting and choral performance was reversed. The chorus in its turn*

¹³⁴ PADEL R., *Making space speak*, in *NDD*, p. 342.

¹³⁵ WILES D., *TA*, p. 63.

¹³⁶ *'The start of Agamemnon is set in the public space of the city. The choreographic focus of the first and longest ode is logically an altar. (...) In the second half of the play the focus shifts from orchestra to door. Agamemnon walks ceremoniously into his palace, and Cassandra follows him through a door identified as the gateway to Hades. (1291) The interior world of the house is finally opened up, the sacrificial victims are displayed, and a woman takes control of the public space of the orchestra...'* Wiles, *TA*, p. 82.

¹³⁷ See for example the scene of lament at *Choephori*, where the chorus together with Electra and Orestes act around the tomb of Agamemnon. *Cho* (v.314- 478).

became marginal.' ¹³⁸ What is symbolised by this later separation of the stage platform from the orchestra is the 'competition' between the choral songs and the recited parts. The gradual augmentation of the recited part (actors) was reflected in the internal organisation of the theatre by the gradual disappearance of the orchestra and the grand structures of the skene buildings of the later theatres. ¹³⁹ The proscenium theatre building can be considered as a final stage of this procedure where the importance of the distinct meaning between the stage's centre and periphery is abolished. ¹⁴⁰ We believe that one could 'read' the evolution of the theatre building in terms of the evolution of drama itself. The original unified space of the 5th century theatre was gradually transformed into a system of divisions. Drama could be seen as the synthesis of different groups of originally unified elements which eventually segregated, became 'competitive' and produced boundaries between them. It is also clear that the theatre building gradually formed limits not only between its 'interior' parts but also with the 'exterior' broader site. We see, then, how, as drama developed, processes of differentiation shape its organisation. Different sorts of 'boundaries' created distinctions between the different groups (actors, chorus, audience), the different sections of the theatre building or among the theatre building and the city. It is clear to us that this is a process imposed by the evolution of drama as a new and innovative genre. What is eventually expressed through the setting of the limits, the materialisation of this process of differentiation, is an augmented need for order and control, as the different roles eventually acquire new meanings.

¹³⁸ SLATER N., *The idea of the actor*, in *NDD*, p. 387.

¹³⁹ See Roman Theatres as for example the Roman theatre of Bostra, or the theatre of Aphrodisian : p.211, 212

¹⁴⁰ See WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, in chapter 3 (*Focus on the centre point*), p. 63-87 where he argues 'The spatial dynamic of Greek Tragedy takes the form of binary oppositions that converge or collide at the centre'.

2.2.2 The role of the actor and the chorus

The Greek term for actor (*hypokrites*) means mainly the one who answers;¹⁴¹
'...*hypokrisis* was also used to mean non-theatrical rhetorical debate' (Cartledge, 1997) As we have already mentioned the actor together with chorus are traditionally considered to have created the first type of 'dialogue performance', even though it is not dialogue in question here as a phenomenon. The phenomenon of the dialogue in the poetic discourse has been present already from the time of the Homeric texts, and the rhapsodes '*must have varied their delivery, volume and tone to convey the different characters.*'¹⁴² But rhapsodes were only the vehicles of dialogued discourse. We will argue that dialogued performance was introduced only when the subject of the word (dramatic character; Agamemnon) is for the first time identified with the subject who utters the word (actor who acts Agamemnon).¹⁴³

'.... *Mimesis alone is not enough to create an actor. Other types of poetry, other performances have been mimetic before.*'¹⁴⁴ The concept of the actor as a professional type does not exist in the 5th century. Actors were citizens chosen by poets (and the *archon eponymus*) to perform only for one particular tragedy or comedy at a time. Actors '*had to be citizens, since they were considered to be performing a properly civic function- in sharp contrast to the theatre in Rome, where 'acting was rather despised as something foreign, effeminate, fake, licentious, in short illegitimate and un - Roman*'.¹⁴⁵ The number of the actors in tragedies gradually increased from

¹⁴¹ Actor: *ὑποκριτής*: one who answers: an interpreter or expounder. One who plays a part on the stage, a player, actor. (LIDDELL & SCOTT, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 740).

¹⁴² RUSH REHM, *Greek Tragic Theatre*, p. 39

¹⁴³ We will analyse this argument further in p.89-92 (chapter 2) and p. 147, 148 (chapter 4)

¹⁴⁴ SLATER N.W., *The Idea of the Actor*, in *Nothing to do with Dionysos*, p.385.

¹⁴⁵ CARTLEDGE PAUL; *Deep play...*, in *CCGT*, p.18.

two to three. As we have mentioned before, the poet of the tragedy could be one of them¹⁴⁶. During the evolution of drama, the special artistic abilities required by actors in order to represent characters become the criteria of judgement in a formal contest. We do know that such a contest existed ‘almost certainly in 446 at the City Dionysia.’¹⁴⁷ The category of the actor as a recognised artist able to influence the outcome of the performance at the contest of the drama festival was a fact by the end of the 5th century, even though actors do not reach a level of personal fame before the fourth century, ‘where an actor like Polos’¹⁴⁸ can become famous for his *representation of a particular role*’¹⁴⁹ The evolution of acting from amateur to professional resulted in the need for training, so that actors could acquire the skills of voice and gesture. The body of the actor starts to be seen as an instrument that has to be practised in order to fill different roles in the best way.¹⁵⁰ How the speech was uttered and how stylised was gesture is still a matter of research.¹⁵¹

To perform, actors must convey on stage and through their body, ‘another’ character. This ‘procedure’ of representation is often related to the phenomenon of ek-stasis. *Ek-stasis*, /eke-stasis/, literally means: standing outside oneself. Therefore *ekstasis*

¹⁴⁶ See :*The Life of Sophocles* and M. R. Lefkowitz : *The Life of the Greek Poets* .

¹⁴⁷ ZEITLIN, FR., ed. *Nothing to Do with Dionysos*, p.390.

¹⁴⁸ Slater (1990) also notes that ‘Epiktetos (*Dissertationes frag. II*, p. 464, Schenkl, edition minor) tells us of his portrayals of Oedipus, both as king and as a beggar. Polos also might be claimed as the inventor of method acting. Aulus Gellius, *Natura animalium* 6.5, tells us how Polos increased the power of his performance as Electra lamenting over the supposed urn containing Orestes’ ashes by using an urn of his own recently deceased son.’

¹⁴⁹ SLATER N., *The idea of an actor*, in *NDD*, p. 395.

¹⁵⁰ The training of the actors, as Slater (1990) argues, must have been primarily from father to son in special actor families, but actors could also have trained others besides their family. ‘As with any other *teckne* in ancient Greece, theatre seems to have run in certain families (...) Given average Greek life expectancies, it is perhaps not surprising that there are no families with more than three successive generations of actors (...) Necessarily then, actors must have trained others beside family members.’ SLATER N., *The Idea of an Actor*, in *Nothing to do with Dionysos* , p.391

¹⁵¹ See, TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*. In the chapter: *Text and Stage Action*, refers exactly to those questions, arguing about the degree of ‘naturalism’ in representation, how

supposes a 'doubleness' of the self. But does this apply to drama performers? ¹⁵² The notion of *ekstasis* precedes the institution of drama and was directly related to the worship of Dionysus. (Dionysus is the god of ecstasy). Dramatic performers could not be in *ekstasis* in the same sense as worshippers of Dionysus since *ekstasis* imposes a complete loss of control in the one who experiences it. Actors always maintain control of their expression. How can an actor be 'outside himself' and still be able to control himself? Even when actors speak the word of their role this is more a dis-placement than a re-placement of the self. By that we mean that the actor does not abolish his identity during performance but he rather uses elements of his identity in order to 'represent' his temporary 'other' self. This displacement of the self appears in earlier types of performers. Rhapsodes, for example, as Plato mentions ¹⁵³, were similar in their technique to actors, but they did not '*come out of themselves*' during their performance.

The most important convention which differentiated actors from other types of performers is the mask. The mask permitted the representation of different characters (even by the same actor) during the play. '*The result is that the body of the actor becomes polyfunctional. It can represent the body of X as well as of Y.*' ¹⁵⁴. We could argue that drama literally starts from the moment the mask is put on the faces of the actors. We need to understand the mask not only as the necessary complement of the costume of the actors and chorus, but as that which identified drama itself, since

stylized the acting was etc.

¹⁵² RHEM R., *Greek Tragic Theatre*, p. 39.

¹⁵³ Rush Rhem notes: '*We learn from Plato that a Rhapsode was similar to an actor, interpreting from memory the lines, combining the technical demands of verse and vocal production ...and was required to play several roles in the performance.*', See *Greek Tragic Theatre*.

¹⁵⁴ EDMUNDS L., *Theatrical Space and Historical Place in Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus*, p.34.

without it there is no drama, tragedy, comedy or satyr play. *'To act a part is to wear a mask'*. Rhapsodes and dithyramb dancers did not use such a convention. If we accept the view that the mask is primarily related to the notion of *ek-stasis* (to be outside oneself) then we can understand that it serves a major function of drama: the connection of the 'outside' and the 'inside' of the self. There is no indication about the masks' use or characteristics in the earliest period of Athenian tragedy. Aristotle says nothing of masks in the *Poetics*.¹⁵⁵ In the Suidas lexicon there is a kind of history of the use of masks and it is stated that Aeschylus first used colored and terrifying masks. The conceptual significance of the mask as that object which is par excellence associated with the notions of disguise and identity has preoccupied not only scholars but also practitioners of theatre. The openings of the mask - the large mouth and the eyes - attract all the attention. *'The spoken words provide all the essence of character and key to action.... The Greeks employed the same word, 'prosopon', for face, mask, and dramatic character, literally meaning 'towards the eye'*.¹⁵⁶ The distance between the audience and the actors as also the actual size of the theatre blurs the physical features of an actor's face. The audience becomes free to imagine the characteristics or the possible 'expressions' of each character. *'Paradoxically, by forcing its gaze out, the tragic mask draws the audience in, for each spectator projects his or her*

¹⁵⁵ The main evidence we have comes from pottery, starting from 470 BC. Masks of the period gave rather the impression *'of attempted naturalism.'* See Pickard Cambridge, *DFA*, p. 119. The earliest examples seem to cover the face alone and the well known tragic mask which covers the whole of the head is a later evolution. *'Much of the anthropological study of mask wearing focuses on ritual and religious contexts, areas that have significant overlap with Greek tragedy.* See Rehm R., *Greek Tragic Theatre*, p 32.

¹⁵⁶ RUSH REHM, *Greek Tragic Theatre*, p 40. The eye and the head are identified with the human being in the Greek language *'... using such expressions as 'dear head'- meaning loved one- and the phrase 'eye of (something)'* where we might use the term 'heart' or 'inner fire' of a thing as Rush Rhem notes.

*imagination onto its surface*¹⁵⁷ Thus it is mainly the voice and the gesture of an actor which seem to become his main means of expression.

As we have already mentioned, actors as a category derived from the body of chorus. During the evolution of drama their 'role' and their importance as individual artists, distinguished them from the chorus. Beyond the different 'role' actors and chorus have in the formation of tragedy, there is also an important difference as to their means of expression; actors speak in a different metre (the *iambic*) forming long monologues or participating in dialogues while the chorus sing and dance. In the Greek culture, song, music and dance are interconnected with the roots of drama and have been considered as forms of 'imitation'.¹⁵⁸ Therefore the chorus, as a group of singers and dancers, constituted an important 'organic' and original part of the dramatic performance. *'In the broader context of the Festival, the factor uniting all the Dionysiac competitions was the group of singers and dancers: fifty for the dithyramb, twenty four for comedy, and at first twelve, later fifteen for tragedy and satyr play*¹⁵⁹. *Nor was this just a Dionysiac phenomenon: long before tragedy was invented at Athens in the latter part of the 6th century, the Greeks in general have been familiar with groups of worshippers who expressed their devotion to particular deities and celebrated festal occasions through richly varied patterns of formal song and dance...*¹⁶⁰ We are not certain about the selection or the identity of the members of the chorus. The most likely answer is that they were male citizens of Athens,

¹⁵⁷ REHM R., *Greek Tragic Theatre*, p 41.

¹⁵⁸ See WILES D., *TA*, p. 88 ; ' *The idea that dance is a form of imitation was rooted in cult, which required dancers to enact for example movement through the Cretan Labyrinth, or the movements of Athena after her birth in full armor. Plato states that (...), 'music' is a matter of 'imitation'*.

¹⁵⁹ The number of the chorus was probably twelve in the plays of Aeschylus and fifteen in the plays of Sophocles and Euripides. Taplin argues that Aeschylus also used fifteen and not twelve.

selected by the poet and probably the choregos.¹⁶¹ But there is a theory which considers that the chorus consisted of young ephebes of Athens,¹⁶² and if that is correct then *'it allows us to sense a complex and finely controlled tension between role and role-player, for the ephebes are cast in the most 'disciplined' part of the tragedy - disciplined in the exacting demands of unison movement, subordinated to the more prominent actors, and characterised as social dependent (women, slaves, old men) - while the actors, who are no longer ephebes, perform a tale showing the risks, the misfortunes and sometimes the glory of ephebic experience'*.¹⁶³ The chorus is often described as mediating between the actors and the audience, in the same sense that the orchestra is considered to mediate between the skene building and the koilon. It has also been often argued that the body of the chorus, being between the audience and the actors, symbolises and represents the active role the audience originally had. But this theory conflicts with the fact that the relationship between audience and chorus precedes the relationship between audience and actors. The chorus, thus, cannot be considered as derived from the audience, since both chorus and audience emerged from the same category, that of participants.

¹⁶⁰ EASTERLING P.E., *Form and Performance in CCGT*, p.157

¹⁶¹ Winkler argues that the chorus was made up of young male citizens of Athens and that one *'must perceive the role and the movement of the tragic chorus as an esthetically elevated version of close-order drill.'* WINKLER J. J., *The Ephebes' Song: Tragoidia and Polis*, in *Nothing to do with Dionysos ?*, p.22.

¹⁶² Winkler (1990) argues *'that the choruses of tragedy were drawn yearly from the ephebes'*, who were *'young men in military service'*. Rush Rehm's (1992) disagreement is *'based on the fact that 'the institutional training of ephebes is not attested in the fifth century.'* He also discusses the evidence of the *Pronomus Vase* (see p. 218) depicting a rehearsal in which the chorus is beardless, as opposed to the actors, but for him this is not evidence for the age of the chorus but a vase-painting convention.

¹⁶³ WINKLER JOHN, *The Ephebes Song*, in *Nothing to do with Dionysos*, p. 57.

Members of the chorus should not be considered as individuals. Being members of the same body, they share common characteristics, opinion and reactions¹⁶⁴ in the course of the events of tragedy. Even if they do not directly interfere in the evolution of the action, we need to realise their importance in the composition of the overall performance and the visual impression caused by their size and constant presence on stage. We have already noted that the chorus's role is gradually reduced. But in the 5th century classical drama is it equal to if not stronger than that of the actors as we should understand that there is no primacy of language over other means of expression such as dance and music. As Wiles states in his analysis of '*The mimetic action of the chorus*', W. Scott '*has demonstrated how the repetition of metrical patterns in the Oresteia points the audience towards patterns of action and imagery. The length of the Oresteia allows the modern reader a unique glimpse of how a particular metre would evoke not only a mood but also a tissue of associations*'¹⁶⁵

2.1.3 Audience and the space of the spectators (*koilon*)

We have tried to show that the process of differentiation between the performers and the audience and between the actors and the chorus is subject to a double relation of both separation and inclusion.¹⁶⁶ Insofar as these 'separations' are physical, they go

¹⁶⁴ However, in *Agamemnon*, v. 1347-1370, the chorus does not speak as one body; each of the members speaks a different line expressing his 'personal' opinion.

¹⁶⁵ See SCOTT W., *Musical Design in Aeschylean theatre*, p. 26-7.

¹⁶⁶ The relation to time is even more complex. On the one hand the audience listens to speech which has been composed before the performance. This might seem an obvious point, but it means from the first, as we argued before, that drama creates a temporal gap between the point of composition and the point of performance. Once that gap extends - as for example in the new production of a play of Aeschylus - to fifty years after the composition of the plays, then we can see that a certain historicity of drama is built into its very form. At the same time, drama is representing events at great distance from the time-present of the audience (as, for example in representing the return of Agamemnon). Thirdly the temporal relations within the play combine a kind of historical present together with a past. The complex of times shows

some way to produce the possibility of an audience. Yet no definition of spectatorship or audience has a meaning outside the conventions of dramatic space. We could say that the audience becomes a passive entity, 'silent and still'. Perhaps a better term would be attentive. Even this description tends to stress the physical demeanour of the audience. But what is occurring within the apparently passive sitting posture of the audience is precisely the external condition of internal passion. If we consider the idea of pre- dramatic rituals in terms of participation, for the subject who participates there is no distinction between internal feelings and external bodily movements. An audience that watches and listens but essentially make manifest no external bodily expression by definition becomes attentive to their own internal responses. We might in this sense talk about the invention of the spectator as a special case of participant. For we are not talking about watching and listening in general; we are talking about a system in which the audience understands what it is to be the audience, one in which its participation has been internalised. The audience understands that it is there to see and to listen but not to act. Of course, this convention may be transgressed. But this transgression leads the audience outside the confines of dramatic conventions and into the general space of the expression of emotions.

We have noted that the category of the audience derived from a common group of participants, who collectively produced the performance. '*...Collective participation was replaced by a delegation of the chorus. The community that was involved in the dramatic performances no longer took a direct part in the action and thus it came to*

paradoxically the importance of the spectators, for all these different modalities of time can only finally be synthesised in the present of the audience. It is that present of the audience which alone can make sense of the drama as having been composed before (sometimes decades before). Drama contains reference to both direct representation of the past and indirect narration of the past in such a way that all these different parts still have as their horizon of meaning the present of the audience.

*be a true and proper public - a public still profoundly implicated and involved in the action itself, but now in a mediated form.*¹⁶⁷ The importance of the audience as a role in the political and social life of Athens cannot be neglected. *'To be in an audience was not just a thread in the city's social fabric, it was a fundamental political act (...) it was above all to play the role of democratic citizen.'*¹⁶⁸ We need to divest ourselves of both a 20th century and an Elizabethan notion of the relation between the performers and the audience. In both periods there is a distinct separation of the 'roles' of the spectators and the performers. The performer provides the spectacle and the spectacle is consumed by the spectators. The presuppositions of those relations are quite inappropriate for the classical drama. The role of the spectators, who were in many cases participants in events of the drama festival, was not as delimited as it is today. *'To judge from the sources, the public itself performed quite vigorously in the theatre during both the 5th and the 4th centuries, sometimes even interrupting the drama.'*¹⁶⁹ Who exactly was this audience? There are still many questions about its composition, as also about its division and classification in space.

The audience was mainly citizens of Athens with *'a great number of visitors from abroad, some of them being persons of distinction specially invited to seats of honour'*.¹⁷⁰ There were four groups of non-citizens in the population of Athens: women, slaves, foreigners, and the resident aliens (*metics*). Each of these groups has been claimed to have been in the audience. *Metics* were present but we do not know their number, if they had special seats and how their admission was organised.

¹⁶⁷ ODDONE LOGO, *The theatre of the Polis in Nothing to Do with Dionysus*, p.16.

Logo gives this schema of the genesis of the drama where he states *'that the history of Athenian Theatre is also the history of a progressive urbanisation of dramatic rites.'*

¹⁶⁸ GOLDHILL S., *The audience of Athenian Tragedy*, in *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, p.54

¹⁶⁹ WALLACE & EDMUNDS, ed., *Poet, Public and Performance in Ancient Greece*, p.106.

Pickard Cambridge considers that the evidence we have from the plays of Aristophanes are enough to deduce the existence of boys both in tragedy and in comedy (*Clouds* 537-9, *Peace* 50-53, 765-766, See *Fest.* p.263). It is not clear whether women were in the audience. Pickard Cambridge argues that in that case the plays of Aristophanes could be interpreted in different ways and are not indicative. Later anecdotes (*Vit.Aesch.* 9, *Pollux* iv. 10, *Atheneus* xii.534c, probably quoting Satyrus) refer to the presence of women but there are not reliable, especially for the situation in the 5th century. Another literary source on the subject is the writings of Plato. In the *Laws* (vii.817) there is a passage according to which women and children attended the tragedy and in *Gorgias* (502 b-d) the same is said not only of women but also of slaves. In any case, '*the frame of Drama is determined by its audience*'¹⁷¹, thus the presence or absence of women or slaves, as Goldhill argues, gives a different interpretation to the plays themselves.

Seats were for sale. There is evidence for the prices, which were paid to the *lessee*, the institution which was responsible for the care of the theatre. The uniform price throughout the theatre was two *obols*. We are not certain about the existence of the 'tickets',¹⁷² but we have evidence about the procedure of distribution of money in order for the spectators to buy a seat in the theatre. Plutarch attributes the introduction of the *theorikon* to Pericles. '*The further reason that the struggle of both citizens and foreigners for the seats in the theatre had become so violent and the buying up of the seats such an abuse that to give the poor their chance, Pericles instituted a theoric*

¹⁷⁰ PICKARD CAMBRIDGE, *The drama festivals of Athens*, p.363.

¹⁷¹ GOLDHILL S., *The audience of Athenian Tragedy*, in *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, p.55

¹⁷² According to Pickard Cambridge there are different objects that claim to be theatre tickets. Possibly they were made of lead. '*Their lettering assigns them to various officials and the names of tribes also appear*'. See *DFA.*, p.271.

*fund from which they were given money to buy seats (...) The theorikon was paid by deme officials to full citizens on the deme register. There is no reason to doubt that it was paid in cash. It seems to have covered more than the price of the ticket and contributed to a citizen's festival expenses. Even the rich are said to have drawn it.'*¹⁷³

The procedure for the acquisition of a seat and the payment for the seat, would have a completely different implication without the existence of the *theorikon*. Attendance at the theatre might have been mediated by payment, but payment was not the same as commercialisation. With the *theorikon* fund, the city enabled the citizen to obtain a valuable 'offer'. This process, the same for every citizen, is another shared 'democratic' experience for the preparation for the drama festival. Even if it can be assumed that it gave the possibility of choice as to attendance or non-attendance at the spectacle, what it really does is to make the value of the theatre seat a possession so valuable to the citizen that it became almost an obligation of the city to provide it. The institution of the *theorikon* is directly related to the meaning of drama in the 5th century, and its role in the 'teaching' of a citizen. '*It is easy to infer that attendance at the theatre was regarded as a citizen's duty, privilege and requirement*'.¹⁷⁴ The transition of the drama from a sacred and civic experience to an event of entertainment happened slowly. It is difficult to discern when attendance ceased to have a religious and civic character and became a 'free choice'. But even by the 4th century it is obvious that drama was much more related to amusement and pleasure than it had been ¹⁷⁵. This fact thus can be considered as an index of the general cultural change between the fifth and the fourth century.

¹⁷³ PICKARD CAMBRIDGE, *DFA*, p.268.

¹⁷⁴ EASTERLING P. E. ed.: *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, p 66.

¹⁷⁵ In the 4th century Plato raises the problem of the meaning of drama in the *Gorgias*:
Socr: And what is the aim of that stately and marvellous creature tragic drama?
Is it tragedy's endeavour and ambition, in your opinion merely to gratify the spectators;
or if there is anything pleasant and charming but evil, to struggle against uttering it,

We have enough evidence to assume that there was a certain division among the audience reflected in the *koilon*. The space of the audience mapped the citizen body. The members of the *boule*, a council of 500 citizens, used a special block of seats. There was also a special group of honorific seats for the distinguished group of war orphans (*ephebes*). Finally there is the possibility that each block of seats belonged to a particular tribe. *'There were also honorific seats -prohedriai- in the front rows of each block. (About the division of the block of the seats see Winkler 1990b, 37-42)'*¹⁷⁶

Inscriptions of names on the seats of the theatres more often belong to the Roman period, though the remains of the theatre of Dionysus, in the first row on sixty seats there is evidence of the inscription of names of individuals and officials who had permanently reserved seats. Relevant marks exist in other suitable places but most of them date from the time of Hadrian. *'There are also fifth century blocks with fragmentary inscriptions which have been plausibly referred to permanent places of prohedriai. Other reserved parts of the theatre were for the Boule and the Ephebes (...). The right to a seat of honour was given by the State and was probably enjoyed by certain priests, of whom the priest of Dionysus held the seat in the centre of the front row, by the archons, and by the generals.'*¹⁷⁷ Goldhill notes that the reason for such segregation was mainly for them to be seen by the other citizens. *'The Great Dionysia ceremonially and spatially (inside the theatre) puts the city on display.'*¹⁷⁸ There is an obvious hierarchy in the space of the *koilon*, the main criterion of which was the

but to declaim and sing anything that is unwelcome but beneficial, whether they like it or not? For which of these two aims do you think tragic poetry is equipped?

Kallikles: It is indeed quite evident, Socrates, that its impulse is rather toward pleasure and the gratification of spectators.

Gorgias 502b,

¹⁷⁶ GOLDHILL S., *The audience of Athenian Tragedy*, in *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, p.60.

¹⁷⁷ PICKARD CAMBRIDGE, *The drama festivals of Athens*, p. 268.

distance of the seat from the *orchestra* and the *skene*. We do not have enough evidence to conclude if there were further criteria. We cannot say if, for example, there was any significant division between left and right¹⁷⁹ or between the centre and the periphery of the auditorium. Archaeological evidence of the theatre of Dionysus in Athens proves that the theatre was symmetrical. The main axis of symmetry crosses the orchestra's and the Skene's centre. In the Hellenistic theatre of Dionysus¹⁸⁰ there were 13 vertical sections (one central, which has 6 sections on its left and 6 on its right and only two horizontals (a main one and one smaller at the upper end of the theatre). The symmetrical parts face each other better. Was there any organised reason of expediency behind the logic of who is facing whom among the audience?

The three statue bases of the Hadrianic period found at three of the feet of the thirteen sections correspond, as Winkler argues¹⁸¹, to the traditional order of the ten tribes. If we assume that the central one belonged to the Boule and Ephebes, and the two remaining must have been the outermost wedges which were most probably for non-citizens, or citizens' wives. *'A similar seating arrangement into the wedges for the ten tribes may have existed for the Pnyx, in which the full citizen Assembly met four times in a month'*.¹⁸² If this assumption is correct, then the central axis is occupied by *'...the two different kinds of tribal representative -citizen governors and citizen in training - whose competition is united by their function as administrators and defenders of the*

¹⁷⁸ GOLDHILL S., *The audience of Athenian tragedy*, in CCGT, p. 60.

¹⁷⁹ The importance of the left and right as one of the binary oppositions in theatrical space was discussed by Wiles 1996 and according to his analysis is identified with the importance of the two different entrances- exits of the theatre. Left and right in the space of the audience do not provide a different perception. The spectator wherever he sits sees the same relations and the same directions in front of him.

¹⁸⁰ See p. 209 or WILES, T.A., *the plan of the Hellenistic theatre of Dionysus after Kores*, p.56.

¹⁸¹ See WINKLER J., *The Ephebe's Song: Tragoidia and Polis*, in NDD

¹⁸² WINKLER J., *The Ephebe's Song: Tragoidia and Polis*, in NDD, p.40

polis as a whole. Winkler also adds: *'The fundamental contrast was that between the internal competition of tribe against tribe (mirrored on other levels of Athenian society by the always vigorous competition of individuals and households) and the equally strong determination to honour and obey legitimate authority, so that the polis as a whole would display a united front against its enemies.'*¹⁸³ This layout explains also the importance of the first row of seats. Because of the incline, the first seats would have been visible from the whole theatre. From this point of view, the further one was from the orchestra the less visible one would have been to the rest of the audience. The spectators of the last upper seats had a view of the whole theatre, while being seen by nobody. They were in some way the 'absolute subjects' of the performance. They were not considered to be objects of display in the city.¹⁸⁴ Honoured spectators by contrast were privileged in their relation to the space of the performance. The view that spectators of the honoured first rows of the theatre had, was different from that of the rest of the audience. In addition to being on display, those citizens experienced the tragedy from a near distance, which brought them closer to the heroes represented in the tragedy. The representation of myth almost 'includes' them. One could say that they belong partly to the space of the performance rather than just to the space of the audience.

Rush Rehm in his chapter, *Production as Participation*, concludes: *'Production as participation meant that the audience no less than the playwrights, producers, and performers, were central to what was happening, part and parcel of the energies gathered and released in the theatre.'*¹⁸⁵ The behaviour of the audience shows the immediacy of the relation between the stage and the koilon. *'Physically, the audience*

¹⁸³ WINKLER J., *The Ephebe's Song: Tragoidia and Polis*, in *NDD*, p.39

was not separated from the performers but surrounded them, with nothing between the orchestra and the lower banks of seats.¹⁸⁶ The audience often reacted by showing its approval and, more often its disapproval. There are anecdotes about incidents of the behaviour of the audience. To interrupt the performance was an offence. The evidence that it was a formal offence shows that violent interruptions did happen. The reaction of the audience is evidence of its 'participation'. We can assume that although there was a distribution of roles as between audience-chorus and actors, this was not set with absolute boundaries and was occasionally broken. In many cases poets themselves used the actors' and the chorus's speech to address the audience, giving it a 'role' in the action. We meet one such case in Aeschylus' *Eumenides*. Athena in her speech at lines 566-73 addresses the Jurors, who at that moment should enter the stage, to participate in the trial of Orestes before the Areopagus, in the second part of the tragedy. As Oliver Taplin indicates in his analysis of the scene, many editors and scholars have believed that in *Eum* 566-73, a crowd of Athenian citizens came on stage. This is not the only time that the text refers to the 'people of Athens'. Throughout the second half of the tragedy this happens many times. (See for example *Eum* 38,681,775,807,854,948,997) The Jurors '*are the pick of the citizen body (487) and hence in some ways the founding fathers of the Areopagus and Athenian justice; and so they stand for the city as a whole. So rather than bring on a large and marginal crowd of citizens who have no function beyond adding to the spectacle, I take the 'σπατός', to the jurors who are the essential elements.*'¹⁸⁷ We agree with Taplin that the entry of the citizens onto the stage was beyond the conventions of drama. On the other hand, we believe that by Aeschylus' insistence on calling the jurors citizens of Athens, the audience is in some sense 'included' in the

¹⁸⁵ RUSH REHM, *Greek Tragic Theatre*, p.30.

¹⁸⁶ WALLACE & EDMUNDS, ed, *Poet, Public and Performance in Ancient Greece*, p.106.

action. ‘...All the addresses and references to the citizens of Athens later in the play apply to the jurors, who are being treated as representatives of the whole citizen body’.¹⁸⁸ The audience identified with the Jurors instead of with the chorus, who in this tragedy have a more active role in the evolution of the play than in other tragedies. By setting the last tragedy of his trilogy in Athens, Aeschylus ‘plays’ with the elements which he has set up, by representing the Areopagus on stage and by addressing the ‘people of Athens’ directly, he unifies the past with the present and the ‘real’ with its representation.

Lastly we refer to the most formal element of participation in the City Dionysia, which was the judgement and vote for the best plays and actors (after 450 BC).¹⁸⁹ There were ten judges, one from each of the ten tribes of Athens and they were selected by lot. After a set of performances, they voted anonymously by placing their ballots in a kind of a jar. Plato in the *Laws* 659 b-c questioned the value of popular judgement, believing that the applause of the poet and the vote by the audience might lead him to ponder to popular taste. Whatever the validity of this opinion, Wallace (1997) stresses that the source of it in Plato was his *general ‘elitist and antidemocratic sensibilities.’*¹⁹⁰ If we turn the argument upside down we might observe that the fact that the surviving theatre plays which we know won the prize, show that the audience of the 5th century had high standards and influenced the competition between the poets positively.

¹⁸⁷ TAPLIN O., *The stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p.394.

¹⁸⁸ TAPLIN O., *The stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p. 395.

¹⁸⁹ About the procedure of voting, see POPE M.,: *Athenian Festival Judges- Seven, Five or However Many*, *Classical Quarterly*, 1986, vol.36, REHM R., *Greek Tragic Theatre*, p.30 .

¹⁹⁰ In that case one should examine the possible disagreement of Plato with the necessity of the institution of the vote in any other public context in Athens.

We have seen that the emergence of the theatre building was determined on the one hand by the development of the roles of actors, chorus and audience and on the other by the nature of drama and its relation to the *polis* as a civic performance. We have already argued that theatrical space was the result of a gradual differentiation of the elements of drama. Even then the limits of these 'designated' areas are not clear. One area slipped into the other; the orchestra 'included' the acting area in some cases, the *koilon* became part of the performing area (in the sense that part of the spectators become objects of attention) the surrounding site of the *polis* 'entered' into the theatre building. We might conclude that these areas were definite but their boundaries remained fluid. The moment those areas acquired built and stable limits (4th century) was the moment of the beginning of the decline of classical drama. The building occurred when innovation was complete, and so the remaining task was to fix the different areas and designations.

We have also examined the evidence for the characteristics of the actors, chorus, and the audience. But to understand how revolutionary the notion of actor is, we need to deal with the notion of representation itself. We would like to argue that whether one accepts tragedy as the evolution from different religious rituals (as most theories more or less claim), or stands by the view that it is basically an innovation, the fact is that with the establishment of tragedy we are dealing with a completely innovative configuration. Not only do we have the elaboration of a completely new spatial organisation related to the functions of actor, chorus and spectator, not only do we have the introduction of a new poetic form, but we argue there is an emergence of two completely new forms of representation (*mimesis*) that we need to identify. For the

purposes of analysis we will call these: the 'representational' body and the 'representational' space.

2.3 Representational body

The Greek body was normally related to the plastic arts through the category of *mimesis*. Of the arts, sculpture has a particular importance, since it concerns the representation of the body as a three-dimensional object in space. We might consider that the sculpture provided the basis for the idea of one body representing another body. Logically speaking nothing could be less obvious than the idea of an actor and indeed many philosophers have been troubled by the idea of 'acting' especially in relation to traditional questions of truth and impersonation. But even before the question of acting there is the issue of the very body of the actor. Strangely, almost no general history of the development of Greek drama pays any attention to what we may call the 'ontological' status of the actor, to what this 'object' is in terms of its relation to the dramatist, to the person that it represents, and to the audience. It is as if to many historians the astonishing invention of this figure has been repressed by the idea that the actor is self-evident. This fact - that the idea still seems to us so self-evident goes to only show what a powerful innovation it was and one which therefore requires analysis. If histories of drama lack any account of the emergence of the actor, we need to make a detour through the history of philosophy. It is in Greek speculation about the nature of *mimesis* that we find clues about the nature of the idea of the actor. But before we follow the issue of the migration of the human body from sculpture to drama¹⁹¹, we should redefine the terms we use. Vernant in his article *The birth of*

¹⁹¹We must add that the two forms of art (sculpture, drama) also developed simultaneously. Even so, if one defines a date for the birth of tragedy (end of the 6th, beginning of 5th century)

images sketches the meaning of the notion of 'image' (imitation, appearance) in comparison with 'reality'.¹⁹² He notes that Plato places all different sorts of activities which deal with imagery into one category. The plastic arts, music, poetry, dance and tragedy, all belong to the one domain, that of *mimetike*. But the word Plato uses to describe the imitative product (*eidolon*) cannot be translated as 'image'; the word '*eidolon*' is closer to what we call 'reflection' than what we mean today by image. The main attribute of an *eidolon* is that it is not 'real'. *Mimesis* therefore is defined as the procedure of the creation of an *eidolon* (*eidolou demiourgia*) and the *mimetes* as the creator of *eidola* (*Eidolou demiourgos*). This process presupposes a third part, which is the one who conceives the *eidolon* (the spectator). '*In the fifth century, mimos and mimeisthai had placed less emphasis on the relation of the imitator to what he imitates than on the one between the imitator- simulator and the spectator who observes him (...) Rather than a representation the act of mimeisthai was a performance, a demonstration.*'¹⁹³ If we assume, then, that the notion of *mimesis* in classical antiquity includes three distinct parts (the *mimetes*-creator, the *eidolon*-creation, and the spectator), now one of the few cases in which the three parts coexist during the process of *mimesis*, is drama. The body of the actor becomes the *eidolon* (as it refers to the historical - mythical character) and the *mimetes* (as he is able to create the representation of the 'real' character) at the same time. The procedure is itself complex and has to be analysed further later. But the body as an *eidolon*, as a three- dimensional representation, already existed in the domain of sculpture.

then it is obvious that sculpture precedes the art of theatre.

¹⁹² His main sources are 4th century texts of Plato (*Republic* 599, *Laws* 668, *Sophist* 265, and *Pol.* 306) and Xenophon (*Memorabilia* 3.10.1-8).

¹⁹³ VERNANT, J., P., *Mortals and Immortals*.

2.3.1 The sculpture of language- incarnation - embodiment¹⁹⁴

If it is the task of sculpture to make the sculpture speak, the poet has the fantasy of how to give his word a body. Myths of the 'speaking sculpture' testify to the cultural reality of both phantasies.¹⁹⁵ Here art seeks to produce what is produced by nature: a speaking body, an embodied word. Historians of ancient sculpture tend to see an evolution from the a-morphic and abstract sculpture (xoanon, Cycladic *edolia*, Archaic *kouros* and *kores*) to the naturalistic sculpture of the 5th century, as if there is a progress towards naturalism. Whatever we might think of such art historical narratives, there are other ways of analysing change, other than in terms of the teleological realization of verisimilitude. What may be at stake both in sculpture and drama is not simply *mimesis* as naturalism. This naturalism, more than an aesthetic pursuit, is the result of the transformations in the relation between the 'sign' and the 'signified.'

¹⁹⁴ The idea of the interconnection of the actor with the sculpture is also referred by Hegel. See *Hegel on Tragedy*, in chapter *Composition and external representation of dramatic works of art.*, p.36,37. In his work on the 'art of the actor' he notes: 'The primary phase of the art of acting is to be found among the Greeks. Here, as one aspect of the matter, the art of speech is affiliated with that of sculpture. The acting 'dramatis persona' stands before us, as an objective figure in his entire bodily realization. In so far as here this statuesque figure is animated, assimilates and expresses the content of the poetry, enters into every movement of personal passion and at the same time asserts it through word and voice, this presentation is more spiritually transparent than any statue or picture.'

¹⁹⁵ SVERJBRO J., in his article *The Interior Voice: On the Invention of the Silent Reading*, refers to the importance of the Andron inscription for his arguments. This inscription 'belonging to a bronze statuette, (now lost), dating from the end of the sixth century, and found in Athens' is as Sverjbo argues a 'speaking object'. The inscription translated by Sverjbro, is: 'I answer (*hypokrinomai*), the same thing (is (a)) to all men(*pasin...anthropoi* (s)), whoever asks me (*e(re)tai*), namely that Andron, son of Atiphanes dedicated me as his *tithe*' Sverjbro notes that 'by using the verb *hypokrinomai*, this inscription raises its 'voice'. We could add that the inscription here is in the first person, and is as if the statue itself 'speaks' through writing the message which ideally it should speak through the voice. See: *Nothing to do with Dionysus*, p.366.

Tragedy involves a complex relation in terms of *mimesis* in which the *eidolon* is put the question ‘Where is the *eidolon*?’ It is difficult to answer, because never in drama has there been a requirement that the body of the actor resembles the body of the one whom he represents. Nor is there a claim that the words by the actor were spoken by the referent. If we considered *mimesis* simply as an ‘accurate’ representation at the level of the body or of the discourse, drama will reveal itself as a tissue of untruth. But insofar as *mimesis* is not reduced to these particular issues of representation, we have to ask what is the system of *mimesis* coded in drama which enabled some classical philosophers to consider there to be a truth in drama? This question can only be answered by reference to the complex of relations which were opened up by drama itself. We can best follow this through a phenomenological analysis of the relations which are entailed by drama and expressed in issues of space. We will consider this first in respect to the space of communication on the stage.

Conventionally communication is considered as a relation between sender and addressee. But in dramatic speech, the relation is more complex and more substitutive. The actor speaks in two registers. He speaks the words written by the dramatist, though he performs them as if they were the words of the character who is embodied in him. He speaks words that are not his, from within a body which refers to another. The functions of sculpture and poetry have in some sense been run together. Moreover, the audience have to understand this. They have to understand something of what an actor is: his words are not his, though his limbs are his. The actor is the effect of a gap between the person and the body. The actor is the sign of someone else. In the actor is concentrated a set of disparate references: the character of the referent, the discourse of the dramatist and the body of the actor. We might

approach these complexities by considering the role of a messenger. His role is to convey the message of his sovereign. In order to do this he must present himself and indeed speak in order to recreate the words of his sovereign and at the same time his own absence. He is a master of presenting his own absence. He must make anyone understand that he who speaks is not himself but the sovereign. His voice is the material support of the sovereign message, but must not be allowed to determine the meaning of the message. He can speak the text and only the text of the sovereign. It would be a crime to interpret the text which he has arrived to speak. Not because the text is necessarily comprehensible, but because any interpretation would come from the messenger and not from the sovereign and therefore would be deprived of authority. The function of the messenger was well understood in Greece. This relation of the messenger to the sovereign is and is not repeated in the figure of the actor. Like the messenger, he speaks as it were in direct quotation. But the source of the quotation is doubled or rather the actor is the subject of enunciation in a double sense. He speaks the words of the dramatist, but speaks as a character of the drama. Certainly the actor is absent as himself and presents only the material support of his own body and his voice. As the subject of enunciation he is not himself, but who he is, is a question which is divided between two different orders. He speaks the words of Aeschylus as if he were Agamemnon. We will attempt to follow the complexity of this state: in the theatre, the human body appears as a representation of another human body, as Agamemnon. At the same time the body speaks. It speaks the words of Aeschylus but the words of Aeschylus are themselves a representation of the words of Agamemnon, even though there is no suggestion that Agamemnon spoke these words. Therefore the name Agamemnon has two references; one is to the mythical figure of Agamemnon but secondly it refers to a 'character' in a play by Aeschylus. Both the

body of the actor and the words of the drama have this double reference. It is this which creates almost out of the paradox a completely new space of representation. The body of the actor speaks the words of the drama as if it were Agamemnon but then the name Agamemnon even if it is transmitted through the mythical figure returns to the dramatist as the source of the word. The actor who is neither Agamemnon nor Aeschylus is at once a representation of both. This complex set of relationships which must be understood here as an invention, indeed as an astonishing invention, describes the fundamental 'space' of acting of the drama. The body of the actor is both the subject of the word and the object of the representation.

2.3.2 The problem of reference in drama - The relation to the myth

If we accept that one of the references of the enacted Agamemnon we see on stage is the mythical figure of Agamemnon, then before we continue our analysis, we need to make a short parenthesis about the broader relation of myth with tragedy.

The proximity of myth and tragedy is obvious. It is present most characteristically in the fact that Greek tragedy invents neither the narrative nor the characters of its plays.

¹⁹⁶ As Vernant notes '*It finds them in the Greeks' shared knowledge concerning what they believe to be their past, the far horizon of the men of former times.*'¹⁹⁷ Epic and lyric poetry transmit myth to the 5th century. In this sense tragedy works on pre-

¹⁹⁶ We should add here that in the history of drama there is some evidence of poets who tried to invent a plot outside the legends of the heroes. Vernant in *Myth and tragedy* notes '*Aristotle's remarks concerning Agathon, the young contemporary of Euripides, who wrote tragedies with plots closely modelled on the latter's. The link with legendary tradition is now so stretched that it is no longer felt necessary to engage in a debate with the heroic past. The dramatist can continue to write plays that invents the plot himself, following a model that he believes to be in conformity with the works of his great predecessors, but for whom, his public, and the whole of Greek culture, the mainspring of tragedy has snapped.*'

existing material. However, this is not the same as saying tragedy is dominated by myth. After all, myth had only existed in its representations and there was therefore always subject to the form which those representations took. Consequently tragedy produces its own versions of myth.¹⁹⁷ At the same time tragic practice uses this material of patterns, mixing or even subverting them, in order to develop its own form, poets become the ‘*mythmakers of Greece*’¹⁹⁹. Tragedy comes last, after the other forms of oral, visual or plastic arts, to participate into the development of the category of myth.²⁰⁰ The fact that tragedy has survived as a written form, also contributed to the survival of the many different variations of myths. *Choephoroi* by Aeschylus, *Electra* by Sophocles and *Electra* by Euripides, are but different versions of the same myth. Through the conditions of writing, myth survives and takes the form each of the poets shapes. The ability of myth to be distributed in so many different and even opposing variations, was never that obvious before tragedy. Those variations express different social and political values, as they are developed and re-worked under the culture of Athens during the 5th century and they eventually expand the ‘mythic megatext’. The relationship of myth with drama is a relationship of origin, recorded through writing. The relation of mythos with *logos* and writing is too

¹⁹⁷ VERNANT J.P., VIDAL NAQUET P., *Myth and tragedy in Ancient Greece*, p. 242

¹⁹⁸ BURIAN P., in his article, *Myth into Mythos : The shaping of tragic plot*, in *CCGT*, p.186-190, distinguishes five of those story patterns: the retribution, the sacrifice, the supplication, the rescue, and the return-recognition. ‘*As story patterns, they control the overall shape of the tragedy, providing a satisfying logic for the adaptation of myths to the stage(..). We cannot assume that the tragic poets, inherited them already connected to the segments of heroic legend that they propose to dramatise.*’

¹⁹⁹ BURIAN P., *Myth into mythos*, in *Cambridge Companion of Greek Tragedy*, p: 184: ‘... I want to avoid giving the impression that there was a fixed body of lore waiting patiently for the playwrights to give it dramatic form. In an important sense, poets were the mythmakers of Greece. At any rate, there was no mythological ‘orthodoxy’ in fifth century Athens...’

²⁰⁰ The mythological material of *Oresteia*, is depicted in many ‘plates’, even before the writing of the tragedy by Aeschylus and its performance (458 BC). After the initial performance, we do have in many cases the representation not just of the myth, but also of the performance itself. However, pictorial tradition had already created the aesthetic visual frame of the myth. The depicted relevant sizes of the characters and objects, their positions, and

complex and broad a subject²⁰¹ to be addressed here. If the reference of the tragedy is found in the myths then we should explore the possibility of the reference of the myths. But '*The father of a myth is almost impossible to find*'²⁰².

One area in which tragedy affected the structure of myth was concerned with the issue of 'characters' in a tragedy. The existence of myth for the Greeks has proved difficult for historians to interpret. The Greeks did not counterpose myth to something else as we might counterpose myth and reality. It is anachronistic to expect Greeks to distinguish between historical facts, persons, and legendary or fictitious characters and facts. Myth comes before any distinction which we might draw between the 'real' and the imaginary, the historical and the mythical. It is only inside the domain of myth, the entire group of Gods and deities find a shelter to develop a complex system of relationships, under the framework of a religious necessity. When Orestes at *Eumenides* (v. 395- 485) discusses with goddess Athena, sharing the same place, is not differentiated from her for the Greek audience.²⁰³ Myth makes possible a number of relationships which are necessary for Greek culture. But tragedy opens up a number of issues which reflect back on the nature of myth. We can approach one of these issues in terms of the question of reference of the name. To return to our example: who is Agamemnon?

An aspect of the space of dramatic representation is to permit the representation of bearers of a name. In the first instance this might be a 'place', an object, or a person.

their relations have basically prepared and pre-arrange, the visual part of the performance. See PRAG A. J. N.W., *The Oresteia, Iconographic and Narrative Tradition*.

²⁰¹ In his article *The Heritage of the Pharmakon*, Derrida stresses the affinity between writing and mythos created by their common opposition to logos. See *Dissemination*, p.145

²⁰² DERRIDA J., *Dissemination*, p.145

It permits the representation of such named entities, as Agamemnon, Mycenae, Agamemnon's palace. This awkward way of putting it allows us to pose the question 'who is that figure in the drama, who is called Agamemnon'. The answers can be various and would include the following a) It is an actor reciting lines written by Aeschylus. b) The name of Agamemnon refers to a hero in the Homeric epic. c) The name Agamemnon presumed the historical figure about whom Homer and Aeschylus write. The system of references is thus complex. The name Agamemnon refers to the actor, to the text of the play, to the Homeric and other stories about Agamemnon and finally as the vanishing point of these references to a presumed historical figure. All this may be true, but it does little to show how the Greek audience would have understood the questions. The modernity of the answer has split up the questions of reference into different types of category. As the actor, the text, the mythical sources and the historical figure we can see this in contemporary dramatic criticism where it makes perfect sense to speak of L. Olivier's Henry the fifth, Shakespeare's Henry the fifth, and the 'truth' history of the English King Henry the fifth. Our argument is that it could be quite anachronistic to attribute these ways of making categories to the Greeks. For example, to speak of Olivier's Henry the fifth, is to rely upon the audience's involvement in our star system and in a capacity to view the play as a vehicle for acting skills. To speak of Shakespeare's Henry the fifth involves a further distinction between Shakespeare's idea of Henry the fifth, rooted not in early 15th century history but in 16th century conception of kingship. We should avoid the retrospective attribution of this economy to the Greeks. What is at stake in the appearance on stage of an actor reciting a text by Aeschylus and in the name of Agamemnon? It is different from modern notions of representing or impersonating.

²⁰³ However, during the evolution of the tragedy the poets will introduce, a vertical differentiation between the areas where the Gods, the dead, and the mortals perform.

The crucial point of the audience's identification was with the name of Agamemnon. The audience already knew whatever was attributed to the name of Agamemnon. Above all the text of Aeschylus was an addition to their understanding of Agamemnon but did not distinguish with a modern insistence between the historical and the fictional. Nor in Greek terms did it require a distinction between *mythos* and *logos*. The drama worked at a level with the knowledge of the audience. That is all that is known about the name of Agamemnon. This situation not only governed the composition of the play but also was a situation which was recognised by the audience. Indeed there was a consistency of assumptions between dramatist and audience. That made possible the emergence of drama. This emergence relied upon the knowledge of myth, but it began to introduce an element of instability within myth. Tragedy is not just a means for the amplification of myth. It also opened the possibility of separating itself.

CHAPTER 3

The Space of Tragedy

This chapter is concerned with identifying the space of dramatic representation – the very possibility of drama. Various scholarly literatures would be relevant to our discussion, but our first task is to elucidate the fundamental Greek innovation which made the very existence of drama possible. Such a fundamental level requires us to conceptualize how the elements of drama came together in a single but complex construction which was yet comprehensible to an audience. We will approach this question from several different angles, trying to integrate our understanding of what is phenomenologically implied by the space of dramatic representation at the same time and to put it in the context of certain aspects of Greek philosophy which might illuminate the way it reflected upon a range of Greek artistic practices.

3.1 The problem of representation

3.1.1 The birth of the representational space

The question of the literal space of the actor and chorus and their relation to one another is, of course, a topic of much scholarly commentary, as we have already seen. But the weight of this scholarship bears so heavily upon the literal issues that a fundamental point seems often to go unrecognized – the invention of dramatic space itself. Here we are not concerned with just how the elements physically arranged themselves in respect to dramatic space, but with the revolutionary invention of dramatic space as such. Of course, this space had precursors and conditions but the major task of this chapter must be to attempt to describe the irreducible novelty of this

space. The fact that this innovation is the basis for histories of drama has allowed many commentators to take it for granted and to assume that there is something almost 'natural' about what we are calling dramatic space. They tend then to contrast subsequent mutations with the Greek original without recognizing that the original itself requires analysis, an analysis of what is a fundamental innovation in Greek culture. In order to be able even to pose the question of this radical innovation we have to disabuse ourselves of different obstacles. The first is what we might call the naturalistic fallacy. Since the rise of naturalism in drama, it has been possible for people to think that in some sense that drama, since it draws its material from 'real life', is a version of real life. Or to put that in logical terms: there is a natural bond linking 'real life' and what occurs upon the stage. In this way discussion of the nature of dramatic space is foreclosed by the assumption that what appears on stage is ultimately dependent upon real life; whatever the artificial mediations of the stage, of the set, of the characters, or of the diction, these do not erase a fundamental and natural bond between drama and real life. Such a view even includes an account of the audience or rather is the reason why no theoretical account of the audience is necessary: they are but bystanders at what are ultimately scenes of life. We describe this view in its most crude form. Of course there is room in such an account for describing a supplementary layer of conventions. But at no point did these conventions cease to modify or mediate something which is regarded as 'real life'. By contrast, we have no idea what real 'real life' is. Our analysis of Greek ancient drama is that is a single but complex construction built out of an interlocking system of conventions which are shaped by the dramatist, performers and audience. Any attempt to analyze this complex totality must abandon any effort to find its real nature somewhere else. This does not, of course, mean that the classical drama is self-

referential; it inevitably refers outside itself the whole time. But this does not mean that its nature can be explained by some general phenomenon outside itself. Indeed, we could start from the apparent paradox that the ancient Greek drama always refers outside itself but that fact can only be explained by reference to its internal character. We can develop this further by treating the issue initially as one of 'representation'. On this view, the invention of drama is related to a radical and fundamental development of the category of representation within Greek culture.

Upon the stage are represented persons and places, times and spaces. The very idea that such a form of representation is possible, in the sense of being comprehensible to an audience, has become so completely obvious to us that we find it difficult to re-experience the revolutionary innovation that it is. It is one thing to speak of representation in sculpture or in painting. It can rest upon the fantasy of likeness, that the statue of x 'looks like' the figure of x or that the painting of grapes 'looks like' grapes. It can be as simple as that picture whose form fooled the birds in the case of Zeuxis.²⁰⁴ But the representation of Agamemnon on stage as we have argued before²⁰⁵ raised many more problems than occur in perceptual resemblance. Representation here is not only complex, as can be readily admitted, it is of the conventions necessary to comprehend it, an invention. Fundamentally, what is at stake is the invention of a space which contains spaces as places, times, persons and actions. The issue will have to be addressed in a systematic way, so as to be able to grasp its complexity, which is synthesized into a single representational space.

It is conventional to refer to drama as a representation. The obvious Greek concept

²⁰⁴ Zeuxis of Heraclea in Magna Graecia, in late fifth and early fourth centuries: one of the most famous Greek painters.

which might inform this is the concept of *mimesis*. We have already said that the relation between *mimesis* and drama is much more complex, than that of, say, painting or sculpture. Even if we assumed that the relationship of drama to *mimesis* is indirect - as in the case of architecture- the sheer complexity of theatrical representation makes this an inadequate comparison. We shall soon see the difficulty of reflecting upon the space of dramatic representation through the concept of *mimesis*. But *mimesis* may be a first approximation for exploring the possible correspondences and relations between different categories. Plato and Aristotle were among the first thinkers to analyze this term which was the key '*to the primary question of the relation between works of art and the world*'.²⁰⁶ Apart from their work, *mimesis* and its cognates are referred to in the work of different writers at an earlier period.²⁰⁷ The original meaning of *mimesis* is not a subject which is easy to analyse. This is partly because modern discussions of the relation between artworks, writing and the external world are often couched in a specifically modern category of representation. It would be anachronistic to assume that the problem and the terms used in the discussion of *mimesis* are the same as those used in modern discussions of representation. Yet most contemporary discussions of *mimesis* seem to do just that and link the question of *mimesis* to that of representation. So the first approximation, as we have already discussed in Ch.2, usually holds that there is a) a representation (*eidolon*), b) a means of representation, and c) the thing represented (the referent). It is not so much that this is wrong, but it is still an anachronistic simplification of the issue of *mimesis*. To enter our subject properly we need to start from the position that '*by the classical drama the language of mimesis is employed to denote what can collectively be*

²⁰⁵ See ch.2, p. 90-94

²⁰⁶ HALLIWELL S., *Aristotle's Poetics*, p.110

²⁰⁷ See Herodotus (2.78), Xenophon (*Mem.* 1.2.3) the plays of Euripides (*Helen* 74), Aeschylus (*Choephoroi* 564) or Aristophanes (*Thesmophoriazusae* 156).

described as a number of types of correspondences' ²⁰⁸, which is the broad meaning *mimesis* adopts by the Classical period, if not earlier.²⁰⁹ We can perhaps elucidate *mimesis*'s nature by inverting the normal way of understanding *mimesis* as a representation of some aspect of the world and considering the representation as something that 'produces' the world. If we give up the notion of the world as a permanent external stable universally recognised referent, then the whole becomes more complex but more intelligible. *Mimesis* produces the world as that which is to be represented. The normal formula that what is 'life-like' is what is like its representations. Zeuxis's grapes enter into the definition of what a grape 'looks like' to the point that those grapes which bore no resemblance to Zeuxis's would not look grape like. Ultimately, if drama as a form of *mimesis* persuades that this representation is 'life-like', this is partly because external reality is increasingly perceived through theatrical convention.²¹⁰ Experimentally, we might say that *mimesis* is not so much concerned with representing the world but with creating the code through which the world is understood - and so may be said to 'create' the world. In this sense it is the representation which defines the represented. If we continue this idea in the modern sense, then perhaps Plato's ambivalence and hostility to the idea of *mimesis* can become clearer.²¹¹ The idea that the representation defines

²⁰⁸ HALLIWELL S., *Aristotle's Poetics*, p.111

²⁰⁹ Halliwell Stephen attempts a preliminary categorization of the pre-Platonic material, distributing the material into the following categories: 'visual representation, behavioral imitation, impersonation, vocal imitation, metaphysical mimesis'. HALLIWELL S., *Aristotle's Poetics*, p.111.

²¹⁰ Chr. Boyer explores the relation between urban space and the theatre : ' *The Greek word 'theatron' means literally 'place for seeing' : argued analogically then , theatrical and architectural space are both cultural prisms through which the spectator experiences social reality, viewing mechanisms that metaphorically spatialise reality... Both the theatre and urban space are places of representation...* ' BOYER CHR., *The City of Collective Memory*, p.74.

²¹¹ Plato referred to different types of *mimesis* in his work. Halliwell notes that '...there exists a complex and significant ambiguity in the collective evidence for Plato's attitude towards *mimesis*'. HALLIWELL S., *Aristotle's Poetics*, 1986, p.111.

the represented takes on a new meaning if we consider that in ancient Greek drama the represented was located in the arena of myth, since it is myth which provided the material of Greek tragedy.²¹² As we mentioned earlier (p.98), our contemporary sense of the 'real' in drama, as for example in the notion of 'real events', had no equivalent. We can make this clearer by noting that in modern usage the idea of external reality and the 'real' designate an order of the verifiable and is precisely distinguished from myth. In Athens there was no such distinction between the myth and the real. Or put another way, myth was external reality in Athens, a reality constantly informed by the history of its representations. *'Tragedy uses myth and thus itself infects the mythic megatext, through a specific complex of narrative forms that is hospitable to specific cultural issues, and those issues in turn become, as it were, canonical in tragedy.'*²¹³ As the mythical object of representation is formed through the mechanisms of drama we realise that *'in an important sense poets were the mythmakers of Greece.'*²¹⁴ The idea that the 'world' or the 'mythical world' is constantly informed by its representations on stage neither conflicts with nor subverts Plato's theory of *mimesis* as it might at first sight seem. The reverse proposition which we have experimented with, according to which *mimesis* is as much concerned with the creation of world as with its representation, provides the conditions for exploring the broader meaning of representation at least in the area of drama. The double meaning of representation - as 'reflection' and 'mirror'- is opened up.

²¹² see ch.2, p.90-94

²¹³ BURIAN P., *Myth into Mythos: The shaping off the tragic plot*, in *Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, p.191. He also adds: *'The intersection in tragedy of a relatively small number of well-known legendary subjects and a limited repertoire of narrative forms helps to clarify the way in which tragedy participates in what has been called the 'megatext' of Greek myth, the repertoire of legendary subjects seen not as a corpus of discrete narratives, but as a network of interconnections at every level, from overtly shared themes, codes, roles, and sequences of events to the unconscious patterns or deep structure that generate them.'*, p.190.

²¹⁴ BURIAN P., *Myth into Mythos: The shaping of the tragic plot*, in *Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*, p.184.

We have argued here is that 'external' reality is not a general and given order, but always what is presented for the subject as experience.²¹⁵ Greek drama was able to re-animate ancient objects by turning them towards Greek contemporary discourses. The Greek mythical world was turned by drama into a new space. Secondly, we have argued that this world was partly formed or at least informed by its representations on stage, and that this is in conformity with Plato's theory of *mimesis*. Tragedy required myth in order to be intelligible or 'life-like' at the same time as it made its own contribution to the overall construction of the myth. This double relation yields a narrative space in which the audience must have understood that tragedy and myth supplement each other. This created a new space: one which assumes that myth is not just a vehicle for retelling the story, except through the innovation of drama. It follows that drama involved a massive growth in the complexity of Greek 'spaces'. We might even say that what characterises Greek culture at this period is the proliferation of new spaces. These revolutionary transformations of space in Greece include a space within tragedy. The mimetic elements of drama became animated as a representational whole only in terms of being contained within this space. This is a space in which very definite and heterogeneous 'objects' are understood by the audience to belong to a zone organized by the conventions of drama. To start with, this is obviously a physical space. This is a necessary but not sufficient condition. It is also as a physical space in the sense of what we might call a designated space. That is to say it is a stage area (Skene / orchestra) in an architectural sense, designated by the auditorium. But this is still not a sufficient condition. The really crucial condition is

²¹⁵ This is the arena which Marxism describes as ideology. We do not assume, unlike Marxism, that these are ultimately determined by the reproduction of class relations but simply that the subject is confronted by representations that belong to a certain ideological regime. Whatever is experienced should be treated analytically as a sign to be interpreted

that this architectural space is also something more: it is a space, which codes the possibility of theatre, and this code is fully understood by the audience. Thus from the birth of tragedy onwards, it is possible to designate a space which is a separate specific space. It is separate from the mind, it is separate from the world, it is separated in the sense of being contained. But at the same time it is a space whose peculiar capacity is that it exhausts itself in representing places. This representational space has no space in it which is not a representation of a place. It is what we may call a logical but not a topographical space, because its own space is always exhausted by the action of representing space. As such it is a completely new space.

3.1.2 The problem of the categories of theatrical space in semiotics

What was important to us to clarify was this special relation between the representation and the represented in drama, a relation which concerns the nature of theatrical space in the sense that it is one of the representations of drama. We will return to this discussion later in this chapter. One of our main arguments is that theatrical space is not only a representation but also the space which 'makes room' for all (representational) spaces to exist. But this argument should not be confused with the semiotic theory about the categories of theatrical space. Therefore, engaging this problem we are already prepared to deal with the semiotics of space²¹⁶, before attempting any further analysis as to the double role (as representation and 'container') of theatrical space.

rather than a simple object to be appropriated.

²¹⁶ The space of drama constitutes a special category of space. Its complexity is difficult to be analysed and conceived even in modernity. Any possible analysis has been limited to the distinction of some of its different 'levels' and their interactive relations. There are three basic categories semioticians distinguish, a) the theatre building, b) the space of the performance and c) the space described but not represented on stage.

According to semiotics, any theatrical space can be analysed through its separation into different parts, with definite 'roles'. Our argument enables us to criticise the semiotics of theatrical space and stage objects as a theory which influenced scholarship on our subject.²¹⁷ We would like to repeat our argument that this approach not only fails to deal adequately with the Greek classical drama but by extension it fails to deal with the space of drama as such. In this thesis, however, we will restrict ourselves to its application to ancient Greek drama. In effect, this approach constitutes a kind of retrospective generalisation which reduces theatrical space to real but secondary elements, at least from the point of view of classical drama: that is to say, its division into elements such as the theatre building and the performance space or/and the space of the narrative. It does not possess the capacity to identify those elements which work together to produce the Greek invention of dramatic space. Semioticians fail to interrogate fundamental conditions of Greek dramatic space. Their categories relate to an already constituted theatrical space rather than the constitution of that space. This is not just a question of origins, for the reconstitution of dramatic space occurs in every performance ancient or modern. All the different elements in play are problematic in the definition of their boundaries as in the relationship between each other. For example, different semioticians of theatre, however else they differ, agree upon what to them is an important distinction, that between the theatre building and the space of the performance. Yet it is clear that this is a superficial distinction which relies upon an unspoken assumption that 'dramatic' space predates or is logically prior to the possibility of this distinction. It leaves un-

²¹⁷ The application of the semiotics of space to classical drama has already occupied the work of Wiles and Edmunds. See Wiles D. *Tragedy in Athens*, Edmunds L., *Theatrical space and Historical place in Sophocles' Oedipus at Colonus*, Hourmouziades, N.: *Οροι και μετασχηματισμοί στην Αρχαία Ελληνική Τραγωδία*.

analysed the crucial issue - the nature of dramatic space itself. Any analysis of classical drama or indeed any fundamental analysis of drama itself requires an analysis of the space of representation of drama. Otherwise the nature of drama can be reduced to a 'slice of life'. By examining the two main elements, different scholars of semiotics distinguish a) that of the theatre building and b) that of the 'space of the performance', which we will argue, in the case of classical drama are identical. The architecture of the theatre building of the 5th century, as a type with variations, and its evolution down to 4th century have been discussed in Chapter 2. In this chapter we should underline the unique characteristic of the theatre building of the 5th century, crucial for our further analysis, which distinguishes it from later theatre buildings. This characteristic is not easy to define. It could be described as the ability of the theatre to be at the same time not only the 'container' but also what we might call the production (*eidolon*) of *mimesis*. We repeat that in classical drama, the theatre building contains the performance and at the same time is contained by it, as the building during performance becomes part of what would in contemporary terms be called the 'set'. Modern theatre distinguishes between the building and the elements which are set in accordance with the production. Even this distinction cannot deal with modern theatre. After all, aspects of stage machinery are permanent even if their function is to assist in producing particular effects for a production. The main areas of the ancient Greek theatre building, such as the permanently sited entrances-exits of the building, were used during the performance to indicate the destination or the point of entry of the characters. The Skene building, a permanent construction, and the main boundary opposite the spectators, became the sign of the different buildings and places indicated in any of the plays. In this sense it is the building itself, the permanent construction, which served the representation of the 'other place', of the

‘original building’, which is always different from the one the audience recognises as the theatre building of the theatre of Dionysus in Athens. The theatre building was thus transformed into one of the objects of representation and according to Plato’s theory of *mimesis*, it should be included among the *eidola* of drama. At the same time it did not lose its ability to ‘include’ mimetic action ‘inside’ its undefined limits.²¹⁸ That a building be conceived as a shell, as a container, is familiar. Theatre building is identified with the notion of the container, even in modernity. What was lost during the evolution of drama is the idea that the building participates in the performance. After the lights go down, the theatre of the proscenium does not impose anything more than the archetypal relation between the audience and the performers. During modern performance, the building ceases to constitute a part of the scenic space, and is literally abolished. By contrast, the strictly organised and codified architectural outline that we call the theatre of the 5th century is present, before, during and after the time of the performance. It does not vanish when the performance starts. It expands through the action, outside of which it is just a ‘space of suspense’, an imperfect, incomplete spatial system, waiting for its completion. It is a place as yet without a meaning. In other words, the 5th century theatre is never ‘replaced’ by the space of the performance as happens in other types of theatre buildings throughout the history of theatre²¹⁹. This building ‘speaks’, performs, conveys and transmits information as much as any other ephemeral construction on stage.

The second major category which semioticians identify is that of ‘the space that performance creates’. It is the space that actors produce through the unrolling of the

²¹⁸ See ch. 2, p.59-67

²¹⁹ In contemporary performances, where lighting plays a major role, when the lights are off, the audience is transferred to another world, concentrated only on what is represented on stage. The theatre building then disappears into darkness, detached from performance.

action on stage. Erica Fischer-Lichte, in her book *'The Semiotics of Theatre'* defines the term 'stage space' as follows: *'We shall define stage space as that segment of space in which A acts in order to portray X; our definition of stage space implies both a practical and a symbolic function: It signifies (1) the space in which A acts, and (2) the space in which X is found'*. This may be true but is inadequate in a crucial respect. It is true that it is the space created by the convention that 'A portrays X'. But this fact is only the case by being articulated to a complex of other conventions each of which employs its own type of representation. Moreover, what A says and does in this portrayal involves the convention that the author has pre-worked- the external mythical materials which the audience already knows. The space of performance is the way in which all these conventions are synthesised in the illusion of a single fluent undifferentiated space. This can occur in the theatre and only in the theatre in classical drama. In classical drama the space that the spectators accept they are transferred to is a space-convention. The only environment in which this convention could happen is the building of the theatre and the most important means for this space to function are the elements of the theatre building. This is what differentiates it from the following description of the modern term as E. Lichte continues in her definition: *'the stage space need not be a place that is especially sectioned off, but rather is situated wherever A acts in order to portray X.'* In classical drama it could never be situated 'wherever'. As we have already said only the elements of the building and the use of the structure of the building could contain the code of the representation during the performance. This ephemeral, fluent and constantly transformed space uses the permanent, 'stable' and visually present structures of the theatre building in order to exist. How could one then define in classical drama the difference between that space and the space of the theatre building? If, on the one hand, there is an organised coded

area (theatre building) and, on the other, an 'ephemeral' performance space, then the 5th century's space of classical drama is situated in the area of their conjunction.

We can now proceed to our main argument according to which theatrical space is at the same time the effect and the cause, the production and the receptacle of drama production. In order to elaborate this argument -that the space the audience experiences during the performance is both a product (the product of the representation, the product of *mimesis*) and its container- we will need to investigate further the notion of *mimesis* and also the notion of *khora* as they appear in Plato's work.

In drama quite different elements of representation are taken from quite different orders of space, time and human identity, and are mixed in a distinctive amalgam. The elements of this amalgam may have their precursors and origins in different practices, but there is an irreducible novelty in the amalgam and the support which it finds in its intelligibility to the audience. Nothing prior, nothing 'natural' prepared Athens for the precise character of this innovation. Consequently the analysis of this innovation requires not just an analysis of the separate elements of drama but also of the conditions which made it comprehensible to the audience. In respect to this aspect we will introduce the term *eidolon* for the theatrical space and the notion of *Khora*, from Plato. We do not suggest that these came from discourses upon the drama but we do refer to them as evidence of what was thinkable for Greeks. Plato's sense of *Khora*, as the condition of representation through the technique of imprinting, is one which shows how philosophical thought might have been adjusted in the light of the emergence of theatrical representation. For the space elaborated through the category of *Khora* enables a space to 'make room' for other spaces, that is, places.

3.2 The theatrical space as ‘production’ and ‘receptacle’

3.2.1 Space as production

i) Eidola of drama and mimesis

We have argued that a fundamental phenomenon in the understanding of Greek drama has been neglected in semiotic analysis. It concerns the radical novelty of theatrical space itself, which, as we have argued, consists in bringing together a heterogeneous ensemble of representations each of which obeys its own conventions but which at the same time subjects and distributes them all within a single synthetic space. This may seem a laborious way of putting things but we are concerned to make our point. That drama is a convention will seem uncontroversial even if some commentators on dramatic space have tended to merge its character as convention with what we have called the naturalistic fallacy. Our point goes much further than treating the totality of dramatic space as a convention. We wish to argue that it is made up of a large number of different conventions, most of which are conventions concerning the problem of representation. Dramatic space is made up of elements which work according to different mechanisms of representation. Only a reading of dramatic space which recognizes both the heterogeneity of forms of representation which are employed within dramatic space and underlines the way in which they are all bound into an apparently seamless ‘entity’, only a reading which respects this complexity within a totality can grasp the radical innovation of tragedy. Although this is not the language of a thesis, we feel compelled to say that it is a marvel. Moreover, this spatial system and its complexity are not only dependent upon an author and the participation of all the elements of the drama but are equally dependent upon the audience to

comprehend each convention by turn together with the articulation of the conventions. Let us imagine that the operation of the space might be called a production. We intend to call this space a production to indicate that it is not just a special type of space but that it produces the drama and is produced by drama. It is both the fundamental dramatic object and it can also be used as a term for the particular character of what in modern dramatic terms is called the 'production'. This enables us to stand back from the usual distinction between, say, a text and performance or between a role and performance and insert between them the issue of all these conventions which go to make up a production. At the same time we ask whether this 'production' can be identified with what Plato calls, in respect to mimesis, '*eidolon*' and therefore ask if the notion of *mimesis* is appropriate. Greek thought, as expressed in the work of the later philosophers, analyses the concept of *mimesis*, as established within the popular and politically important art of drama²²⁰. *'By elaborating a theory of mimesis, or imitation, that was closely linked with the new experience afforded by the tragic spectacle, Plato and Aristotle set out to determine the status, place, and function of what today is referred to as art or the 'imaginary''*²²¹ As we have already noted, Plato gives several definitions of *mimesis*. *'The formulas in both the Republic and the Sophist correspond. In the first (Rep. 599a7), Plato calls mimesis a 'demiurgy of images [eidolon demiourgia], '...' and in the second (Soph. 265b1), he says: Mimesis is something like a fabrication (poiesis), a fabrication of images, to be sure and not realities'*²²² In relation to the possible categories of representations, he seems to refer

²²⁰ Vernant in *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, p.185, underlines the importance of drama in relation to *mimesis*. *'Tragedy played a decisive role in man's apprehension of fiction in the strictest sense of the term. It was this that made it possible for a Greek poet, at the turn of the fifth to fourth centuries, to see himself purely as an imitator, the creator of the world of reflections, illusions, pretences and fables, all of which constituted a world of fiction, alongside the world of reality'*.

²²¹ VERNANT J.P., VIDAL NAQUET P., *Myth and Tragedy in Ancient Greece*, p. 242.

²²² VERNANT J.P., *Mortals and Immortals*, p.165.

in *Sophist* to either 'faithful' or 'false' reproductions of an original, considering the original a stable external element. But as we have argued, in drama there is no single external existing object to be imitated. Drama depends upon a complex system of references which do not provide a stable equivalent to an 'original'. Plato in *Sophist* 235d discerns two forms of the mimetic: one leads to faithful reproductions, (the *eikastic*) and the other to making semblances (the *fantastic*) '*which simulates the eikastic, pretending to simulate faithfully and deceiving the eye with a simulacrum (a phantasm), which constitutes 'a very extensive class, in painting (zographia) and in imitation of all sort'*'.²²³ As to the first mimetic form (the *eikastic*), one assumes that to achieve a faithful reproduction, the representation should be made from the same 'material' as the original. Products of the second mimetic form (the *fantastic*) could never be mistaken for the original. They represent the original through different means (as for example through painting or through verbal descriptions) producing 'signs' of the original. But by being signs of the original, those representations are really interpretations of the original. Plato's categories of representations (*eikastic*, *fantastic*) depend on their differential relation to their reference. The *eidola* of drama (either the actor, the action, or the space where the action takes place) have a complex system of references. But in drama, these terms (*eikastic*, *fantastic*) are identical. As the *eikastic*, drama's representations are made from the same 'material' as the original (human body, three-dimensional space) but they cannot be considered as 'faithful' reproductions. The adjective 'faithful' presupposes a well-defined original, which in our case is lost in the unclear domain of myth. In this sense, drama's *eidola* are but interpretations which inform their reference. According to the Platonic description, by being interpretations, by being 'signs' of their references, the *eidola* of drama belong

²²³ DERRIDA J., *Dissemination*, p.186 note 14b.

to the category of the fantastic. The problem of reference is always there. But this fact, that dramatic representations belong to both and to neither of the Platonic categories (the *fantastic* and the *eikastic*), itself distinguishes them from all other *eidola* and isolates them in a special category of representations. The difficulty of the analysis of this special category of representation in relation to the theory of *mimesis* rests upon a failure to delimit the 'original' and as a result, the *eidola* produced. (As *eikastic* or *fantastic*). Even so, we will continue to use the term *eidolon* when we refer to the representational space of drama. We have decided to use this term which for Plato is seen rather as an '*objective product of certain types of art*', even if it is often identified with '*phantasmata*' or with what we would have called in modernity illusions. We prefer its more archaic definition according to which '*eidolon manifests both a real presence and an irremediable absence at the same time*'.²²⁴

ii) Theatrical space as *eidolon*. The representation of a place

Viewed from the point of view of myth, we might think of the invention of dramatic space as being a technique for animating mythical narratives. The mythical poem might be thought of as being represented through the addition of dimensionality. The poem/ode is staged. What had been the single voice of the poet is now divided between the different voices of actors and the narrative space of the poem is projected on to 'real' space. Such a way of treating the issue as the supplement of technical developments can be seen in some accounts of film as a medium which see it as an extension of the capacities of the theatre. Film was permitted the projection of many more settings; the theatre would be able to abandon the constraints of its own

²²⁴ VERNANT J.P., *Mortals and Immortals*, p.171.

apparatus. But, of course, this account is naive. Even if there was a real historical connection between the theatre and the early cinema, it is clear that an entirely different apparatus was at stake, one that had its own conventions, one that developed its own spaces and one which contained entirely different possibilities. By the same token, we can see that the invention of dramatic space was not just the continuation of myth by different means. It is not a question initially that there was a change in the culture towards the representation of the myth, but rather that the appearance of the apparatus of drama revolutionizes the means of representation.

Theatrical space, certainly remains one of the results of the Myth, one of the main *eidola* of drama. It is in drama performance where for the first time in history the three-dimensional *eidolon* of 'another' space appears. As for any of the other *eidola* of drama, theatrical space has a complex system of references. It 'represents' while at the same time forms the different places of myth. Those mythical places which until the moment of their representation exist in an abstract and undefined form are now always geographically defined. All those places, represented during performance, are always situated in a certain position on the 'map' of the period, which the audience knew. The need of the Greeks to know at least the position, if not the characteristics, of all places they refer to shows their difficulty in conceiving the notion of a 'fictitious' or abstract space. (Plato will introduce the notion of space as an abstract container rather later)²²⁵. In that way, even the dwelling of the gods or the dead, is identified with a certain geographical place in Greece (for example mount Olympus in northern Greece was considered to be the dwelling of gods) Greeks did not discern any difference between the *eidola* which refer to the 'real' (for example the palace of

²²⁵ See p. 117-127, where we explore the notion of *Khora*

Agamemnon at Mycenae) and the *eidola* which refer to mythical places (such as the Hades). During performance, the palace of Agamemnon is for the audience as 'real' as the space of Hades, in the same sense that the phantasm of Clytemnestra is as 'real' as the character of Clytemnestra. In this process where one expects the spatial *eidolon* to 'represent' the site where the mythical action took place -for example the palace of Agamemnon- the theatre building became the *eidolon* itself. One and the same architectural element, the *Skene*'s central door, was transformed depending upon the action, into the main door of the palace in *Agamemnon* and *Choepori*, or into the door of the temple in *Eumenides*. This transformation was not necessarily visual. The audience knew where the door led without the need of a visual sign. In the same way as the actor lent his body to his 'part' and used it as an instrument for the representation of another body, the theatre building lends its means in order to be transformed into the space the tragedy refers to. But it is more than certain that its physical relation and resemblance with the 'original' space is far more distanced than that of the actor with the 'original' character as the degree of the complexity of the 'original' space could never be represented. The *eidolon* of a space is above any other *eidolon* of drama, a complex sign, developed and conceived only through its own code and conventions.

iii) The form of the *eidolon* of space

Theatre must be considered as one of the visual arts, in the sense that it re-presents a sequence of images in front of an audience. What was the status of those places which appear, disappear, replace each other, and sometimes re-appear in the course of the performance? In these terms theatre was no different from the plastic arts of the era,

which aimed at a 'naturalistic' representation using forms familiar to the audience²²⁶.

At the same time, representation in drama must have obeyed not only the general dictates of fifth century aesthetics, but also the forms inherited by the performance tradition.

One way in which scholars have tried to approach this issue is through the question of naturalism. But we can only approach this question with a number of cautions. Firstly, the term naturalism in theatrical history has its own history arising distinctively from 19th century issues. The question of naturalism is more suited to a consideration of Ibsen than it is to the Greek drama. Secondly, we should beware of identifying the issue of naturalism with the question of *mimesis*. The relation between what is represented on stage and its reference to what it represents, is as we have said complex and cannot be reduced to being naturalistic or 'realistic'. Some objects on stage were indeed literally 'real'. Scholarship suggests that objects such as the net, the red carpet or the chariot in *Oresteia* were perfectly ordinary 'real' objects appropriated from everyday life.²²⁷ But this should not tempt us into over-stressing the naturalism of the contents of the stage. The representation of the 'whole' of a specifically located space on stage is a different subject. Public or open spaces are located in the orchestra. A marker in the centre of the orchestra is according to Wiles, the main sign of the representation²²⁸ (see, for example, the tomb of Agamemnon in *Choephoroi*). Private enclosed spaces (palaces, temples) are only represented through their boundaries to the 'public space' of the orchestra: the Skene front building. Neither the Skene building nor the orchestra will easily fit into the question of

²²⁶ As Taplin points out, the Golden Age's entire vision aimed at realism and illusion.

²²⁷ Even if those objects were not specially constructed for the purposes of the performance, during the performance they were transformed into *eidola*, into representations of another far distanced mythical reality.

'naturalistic' representations. Nor could it be argued the Greeks failed to make this naturalistic. We should not forget that already having devices such as the *mechane*²²⁹ for characters to fly, the Greeks proved that were quite capable in practical and technical matters. Therefore it appears that the criteria which defined the characteristics of the *eidola* -objects or areas- must have been mainly aesthetic. When, for example, the palace of Agamemnon is represented on stage, it is important to clarify what made this representation possible. We could discern at least three ways. Firstly, the palace was represented through the words and actions of the actors. (That is to say, if this is 'what is happening', then the audience know 'where' it is happening.) The drama has a dimension of self location. Secondly, it is represented through the appearance of definite objects. The appearance of the red carpet itself restricts the location to Agamemnon's palace. Thirdly, the palace was represented on the front of the painted *Skene*. The actor's words and actions reveal the identity of a place either through implication or by direct address (see *Ag.v3*, 518). The carpet presents Agamemnon's palace through restriction - only Agamemnon's palace could have a red carpet. The painted *Skene* represents Agamemnon's palace through

²²⁸ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.82.

²²⁹ The *mechane* was a 'kind of a crane for swinging personages, human or divine, through the air so as to give the impression of flying'. (see Pickard Cambridge, *Theatre of Dionysus in Athens*, 1949 p.127). Pollux describes the *mechane* as follows: 'The *mechane* shows gods or heroes- Bellerophons or Perseuses- in the air. It is situated by the left *parodos* at a height above the *skene*. The *mechane* of tragedy is the *krade* (fig- branch) of comedy' (Pollux iv.128) The mentioning of 'Bellerophons' corresponds to the tragedy of Euripides, '*Bellerophon*' where, as we know from Aristophane's *Peace*, Bellerophon was shown riding on Pegasus. In that case the *mechane* would have been used to represent the horse and the rider in some form. It is very improbable to imagine that a real horse with an actor on its back was suspended in the air. The *Mechane* was probably situated behind the *Skene*. Arnott supposes that '...the actor would attach himself in ground level. The arm would then be raised to allow him to clear the top of...' See Arnott P., *Greek Scenic conventions*, 1962. This device required a man to operate it (*μηχανοποιός*). Most of the scholars agree that the use of *mechane* in the plays of Aeschylus is very uncertain. Arnott believes that, in any case, and since the natural development of Greek drama is from 'the simple to the elaborate', this device could not have been used as early as in the *Oresteia*. He believes that the *mechane* 'belongs to the illusionistic trend of the fifth century...The flying machine is an elaborate and highly realistic device, and argues a greater theatrical sophistication.'

pictorial resemblance -not a representation of Agamemnon's palace but to what Athenians might understand Agamemnon's palace to be. Now each of these modes of representing Agamemnon's palace is different but at the same time they are synthesised into a single fluent space. This space is a representation and, as we have argued, is a fundamental novelty.

Up to this point we have attempted to characterise the fundamental relations of dramatic space. We have criticised semioticians for their relative failure to penetrate the fundamental innovation which is at stake, although doubtless we are guilty of failing to find an adequate expression ourselves. Much of the material of this chapter has been presented as if the space of drama might be considered to be the '*eidolon*', insofar as drama is regarded as a mimetic practice. While in describing individual elements of drama in this way seems to us quite useful, we cannot conceal a doubt as to whether there is ultimately a difference between the two. Ultimately, an *eidolon* seems to require if not a singular original, then a degree of homogeneity and stability in what is held to be represented. Yet it is precisely the combination of heterogeneous elements which characterises dramatic space. It is a synthesis of many determinations and therefore certainly qualifies as a 'production'. By the same token, it cannot be made coherent as an *eidolon*. The paradox is that dramatic space is not based upon *mimesis* but for its success has to appear to be based on *mimesis*. It may be that there is also some value in trying to think out dramatic space by reference to another Platonic category, that of *Khora*.

3.3 The theatrical space as receptacle – *Khora*

Theatrical space, unlike linguistic or mental space, is firmly located in its three-dimensionality. But this three-dimensionality does little to indicate its precise character. In a way, theatrical space is always contained by the theatre building. Of course, that building also contains the audience. One could also remark that inside this 'container' (receptacle) there exists another place - the area which defines where representation takes place. In modernity this area could be identified as the stage. For ancient Greek theatre this area could correspond to the area of the Skene and the orchestra. But the difference between the modern stage and the Skene/orchestra is not just a difference of literal space. We have already mentioned that the Skene/orchestra had no definite limits and developed a dialogical relation within the broader site of the theatre building.²³⁰ *'Greek theatre was the richer for its lack of a finished architectural frame.'*²³¹ Western theatre has developed (especially since the introduction of the proscenium) a physical isolation of the stage from the rest of the theatre. The proscenium arch creates a transparent plane so that anything visible behind it becomes part of the space of performance. It marks the beginning of a real if non-visible interiority. The audience may see through the plane into a space where objects or places are represented. Greek theatre did not have this singular delimited interiority which creates a relation of seeing into a space. In modern theatre things are represented within this space partly by their consistency over a minimum

²³⁰ Wiles in his book *Tragedy in Athens* takes the opportunity to underline this view in different chapters. One of his most interesting points comes when he argues about the connection between the statue of the god, the Skene door and the altar of Dionysus behind it, at the theatre of Dionysus. *'The alignment of the god (the statue), door and altar would have been apparent to the majority of the audience in the upper seats. (...) The relationship of tragic performance and the space of sacrifice has great symbolic importance...'* (p.58)

Wiles makes that clearer using an example from the *Agamemnon* (v.1290-1310): *'Cassandra compares the Skene door to the gates of Hades, approaches the altar meekly like a sacrificial ox, and reels back from the smell of death. Such images are rooted in physical actuality, for the death behind the Skene was real, the victim had to acquiesce in death to spare the guilt of his killer, and the smell of the dead animals must have lingered during the days of tragic performance'*. (p.59)

conventional unit of time - a scene or an act. By contrast, in Greek theatre the orchestra/ skene can be the 'tomb' at the beginning of a tragedy and then change after some lines into 'the palace'. The capacity of this area of the building to be transformed is not limited by consistency. The Skene/orchestra of the classical Greek theatre cannot simply be conceived as a given delimited space, but must be thought of as a permeable space. Insofar as it could 'represent' a mythical place that the Greeks knew, it becomes the sign- in the sense of eidolon - of anywhere. It is a field for the representation of place not in the sense of a representation of place, but as the 'container' of place which is not a place itself. It is the space in which different *eidola* of places may be summoned. It is also the space upon which any place can be 'imprinted'. During the performance it is the 'imprint' itself. We have to imagine that the orchestra-Skene is simultaneously the imprint, the space of impression and the means of impression. This formulation, which produces the notion of space as an 'imprint-bearer'²³² as well as a 'receptacle', is precisely the concept of *Khora* which is described by Plato in the *Timaeus*.²³³

This way of expressing the spatial status of the Skene / orchestra may seem awkward.

²³¹ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.62.

²³² *Timaeus*, 52a-52d./*Timaeus of Plato*, ed. Hind. See also DERRIDA J., *On the Name* where Derrida notes that 'Khora figures the place of inscription of all what is marked on the world.' p.106.

²³³ 'And the third kind is space (Khora) everlasting, admitting not destruction, but affording place for all things that come into being, itself apprehensible without sensation by a sort of bastard reasoning, hardly matter of belief. It is with this in view that dreaming we say that all which exists must be in some space (Khora) and that what is neither on earth nor in heaven anywhere is naught. All these and many kindred fancies have we even concerning that unsleeping essence and truly existing, for that by reason of this dreaming state we become impotent to arouse ourselves and affirm the truth: namely, that to an image it belongs, seeing that it is not the very model of itself, on which itself has been created, but is ever the fleeting semblance of another, in another to come into being, clinging to existence as best it may, on pain of being nothing at all; but to the really existent essence reason in all exactness true comes as an ally, declaring that so long as one thing is one and another thing is other, neither of them shall come to be in the other, so that the same becomes at once one and two.' *Timaeus* 52a-d, ed. Hind.

Why not say that it is simply a space which can be used for performance? Our answer is that its status is more complex than this and might best be clarified by the category of *Khora*. Our characterization of this space tries to follow that aspect of the category of *Khora* which is concerned with the transition of image into space, almost specifically with the capacity of *Khora* to 'make room', in the English expression, for an object. This 'making room' operates at two levels: firstly the empirical fact of 'making space for', but secondly and more philosophically, the capacity to enable the object to exist more fully.

Central to the notion of *Khora* is that it refuses to be distributed between the 'sensible' or the 'intelligible' while remaining the condition of both. *Khora* does not correspond to any of our conventional notions of abstract space, but proposes itself as their condition²³⁴. We should beware of attempting to reduce *Khora* to its conventional translation as a receptacle if by receptacle we imagine a box. A box has a definite volume and a fixed limit which divides interiority from exteriority within it and has an exteriority. If *Khora* is a receptacle, it is one without fixed volume and without any fixed division between exteriority and interiority. It is above all productive. It creates space. Doubtless it is through the term *Khora* that Western thought faces the first attempt of space to be conceived in an abstract form beyond the limitations of the 'sensible' or the 'intelligible'. We are not suggesting that Plato had the theatre in mind when he developed the notion of *Khora*. There is no evidence for this. We are, however, noting the astonishingly close parallel between the representational mechanism of the orchestra/ Skene and the structure of the category of *Khora*. On the one hand, we have *Khora* as the container of all places, whilst on the

²³⁴The figures (comparisons) that are proposed by *Timaeus* for *Khora* are: 'mother', 'nurse', 'receptacle', 'imprint - bearer'.

other we have the space of orchestra as the possible representation of all places. What the parallel does demonstrate is that such a mechanism was thinkable in the 5th century and was indeed thought out at a philosophical level. The concept of *Khora* functions as evidence in our argument in the following way. In suggesting that the invention of dramatic space involved an astonishing innovation across a range of representational mechanisms, the argument here is simply that the mechanisms we are attributing to the orchestra/ skene are possible if not proven because the same mechanism is thinkable in Greek culture and is soon thought by Plato in the *Timeaus*. We are aware of the evidential poverty of this argument, which must remain an hypothesis. But we are concerned to demonstrate its possibility.

There are three major reasons why we have organized this discussion around *Khora*. The first, is that the nature of *Khora* provides a theoretical background for us in order to explore the space of the theatre (or any space) under the notions of ‘receptacle’ and ‘imprint-bearer’. Although *Khora* belongs to the 4th century BC, we are going to use the term in order to form our argument about the nature of this special kind of space (theatrical-representational space) which never directly occupied Greek classical philosophical thought.²³⁵ The notion of *Khora* deals with the meaning of space as an unlimited ‘vessel’, impossible to perceive by our senses or intelligence, which is the absolute receptacle and the basic substrate: ‘*The third kind is space (Khora) everlasting, admitting not destruction but affording place for all things that come into*

²³⁵ Greek thought explored the problem of space mainly through the writings of Plato and Aristotle. Neither of the two was involved directly with the special category of theatrical space, even though their contribution to the issue of space concerns our research as it provides some basic general analysis. However, the comparison and presentation of their thoughts on the subject constitutes in itself, a whole separate object of research. We would like to note that Plato poses through the notion of *Khora* some of his most complicated metaphysical questions while Aristotle’s ‘*object of inquiry is a purely physical one; what is*

being, itself apprehensible without sensation by a sort of bastard reasoning, hard to believe²³⁶ This helps us to understand the nature of the theatrical space. The orchestra/skene is both the image - the *eidolon*- the print of the places which tragedy indicates but it remains more productive than a fixed representation. It retains the possibility of generating these representations. Secondly, we have already seen the limitations of the category of *mimesis* and *eidolon* in grasping the relations of reference between drama and the world of myth. The category of *Khora* provides a different point of access to these problems. With *Khora*, we have no reference to the relation of the 'original' with the image (representation), at least not through *mimesis*. However, there are two points about the former issue which deserve our attention: as described in *Tim.*52c, the image is the '*...fleeting semblance of another...*'. What permits the image to come into existence is not the '*...very model of itself on which itself it has been created...*' but another 'grasping existence' and that is *Khora*. '*Space (Khora) then is that which differentiates the image from the idea and thereby enables the former to exist, ουσίας αμωσγέπως αντεχομένη. It is a dubious kind of existence that is in space (Khora): but such as it is, it is owing to space (Khora): for did not space (Khora) exist, nothing would remain but the idea; and since the image cannot be in that, it could not be at all*'.²³⁷ According to the former it is *Khora* which makes it possible for an image to come into existence. In the same way, it is only theatrical space which permits any representation, any semblance, and any spatial sign to exist, independently of its 'mythical' reference.²³⁸ Unlike the category of *mimesis* which

Topos? (Meaning by *topos* the place in which any object is situated, and which ultimately it is: το πέρας του περιέχοντος σώματος. See *Timaeus*, ed. Hind., note 9, p.184.

²³⁶ *Tim.*52b, ed. Hind.

²³⁷ *Timaeus*, ed. Hind, note 10. εν ετέρω τινί, p.185.

²³⁸ We usually accept that the original – the model- is 'real', while the representation is not 'real'. But in the case of drama it is the other way round: the original does exist only in myth. By coming into existence, the representation acquires its independence from the original and thus it is as 'real' and autonomous as the original.

establishes a relation of production and dependence between the original and the *eidolon*, the discourse of *Khora* declares a dissociation of these two elements; '*...but to the really existent essence reason in all exactness true comes as an ally, declaring that so long as one thing is one and another thing is other, neither of them shall come to be in the other, so that the same becomes at once one and two*' (Tim. 52d Hind. ed.) As '*...things cannot be two and one at the same time, nor can the same thing be at once original and copy. If the copy were inherent in the original, or the original in the copy, the difference between them would be lost.*'²³⁹ Thus neither the original is present in the *eidolon* nor the *eidolon* in the original. In this affirmation we face the third possible mode of relation between the original and the *eidolon* which is actually their independence from each other. If the *eidolon* needs neither the original in order to come into existence (as is maintained through Plato's theory of *mimesis*), nor is the original informed by its *eidolon* (as we argued happens between the mythical models and their drama representations), then what is the kind of the relation the description of *Khora* provides?

A third important point for our research is given by the line which indirectly questions the relation of *logos* with *topos*. '*...- which we, beholding as in a dream, say of all existence that it must of necessity be in some place and occupy a space, but that which is neither in heaven nor in earth has no existence.*'²⁴⁰ (...) '*Because everything of which our senses affirm the existence exists in space, and that which is not somewhere is nothing. For we are held fast in the thrall of our own subjective perceptions, and suppose, as dreamers do, that the visions within our own consciousness are*

²³⁹ *Timaeus*, ed. Hind, note 13. οὐδέτερον ἐν οὐδετέρῳ, p.185.

²⁴⁰ *Tim.*52b, ed. Hind.

external realities'.²⁴¹ Plato here indicates that having been prisoners of our '*subjective perceptions*', we cannot affirm that '*what is neither on the earth nor in heaven anywhere is naught*'.²⁴² However, he bases the synthesis of *Timaeus* on this argument, as it is indicated in Derrida's article on *Khora*. '*...Socrates privileges here again the situation, the relation to place: the genus of sophists is characterised by the absence of a proper place, an economy, a fixed domicile; these people have no domesticity, no house that is proper to them*'²⁴³. But, at the same time, Socrates operates from a sort of pre-place: '*I address you (sophists) from your place [place] in order to say to you that I have no place [place], since I am like those who make their trade out of resemblance - the poets, the imitators and the sophists, the genus of those who have no place*'.²⁴⁴ By questioning the validation of this statement through the description of *Khora*, Plato contributes to the questioning of the space-time as we are used to conceiving it, underlining the importance of the 'whole', in comparison to the illusion of the 'part' which our human perception presents to us. '*It must be remembered that Plato was the first who had any real conception of immaterial existence*'.²⁴⁵ Socrates' (Plato's) argument that any *logos* correspond to a *genus*, and thus '*it is the belonging of a genus to a proper place which guarantees the truth of its logos ...and of its action*'²⁴⁶ is an established idea in classical Greece. Public spaces (theatre auditorium as well as we have seen²⁴⁷) are 'mapped' according to the different *genus* and each citizen belongs to a certain area according his *genus*. The articulated world is validated only through the citizen's *genus*. The application of this idea to drama is obvious. All characters of tragedy (and comedy) speak and act from a certain place in

²⁴¹ *Timaeus*, ed. Hind, note 2, p.185.

²⁴² *Tim.* 52 ed. Hind.

²⁴³ J. DERRIDA: *On the Name*, p.107.

²⁴⁴ J. DERRIDA: *On the Name*, p.108.

²⁴⁵ *Timaeus*, ed. Hind, note 2, p.185.

²⁴⁶ J. DERRIDA: *On the Name*, p.108.

accordance to their genus. In classical drama there is no such concept as a character who acts from 'nowhere', such as we meet in modern dramaturgy²⁴⁸. Action can only happen in a defined place and time. With the description of *Khora*, Plato provides a new account of space. Since *Khora* 'contains' everything that comes into existence, then any kind of space or place is also included. Theatrical space, theatre building, orchestra-Skene, belong to the structure of *Khora*. The space of representation is nothing but a component of *Khora*. The relations we have identified give reason to argue that there is a much more complex relation between the space of representation (orchestra / skene) and *Khora*. Could we make the hypothesis that theatrical space (orchestra / skene) is a *mimesis* of what we call *Khora*? How could we define such representation when the 'original' (*Khora*) cannot be conceived through sense or intelligence, but through a 'bastard reasoning'? Or when, as Derrida indicates, the original provokes a *mise en abime*,²⁴⁹ inside its discourse? These philosophical conundrums go beyond the topic of this thesis. We will just add that theatrical space becomes definite during performance when it becomes the representation of a place while it remains 'infinite' insofar as it is a vessel of all possible representations which come to take a place 'inside' it. While *Khora* contains 'every thing', theatrical space is able to contain the representation of 'every thing' though it cannot contain 'every thing'. *Khora* 'contains' the world, while theatrical space can 'become' the representation of any certain part of the world. We could conclude that the closest relation between theatrical space and the discourse of *Khora* is before or after the time of the performance. Then, this 'empty' space, this space which awaits any place,

²⁴⁷ see chapter 2, p. 79-81.

²⁴⁸ For example see S. Beckett's, *Waiting for Godot*

²⁴⁹ According to Derrida's article, this *mise en abime* '*regulates a certain order of composition of the discourse...Khora, the opening to a place 'in' which everything would, at the same time, come to take place and be reflected (for these are images which are inscribed there)*': DERRIDA J., *On the Name*, p.104.

consists of a sort of representation, a sort of image, a sort of simulacrum of *Khora*.

The argument of this chapter has had two main objectives. The first is to insist on the utter innovation of the dramatic space. To refer to drama's evolution from epic poetry or to its dependence upon myth, is often to miss the point. Such generalizations obscure the radical invention. We have tried to show that drama, this invention, depends upon a combination of different types of representation which are organized in quite different ways but which are subject to one principle of organization which we are calling dramatic space. The power and the fluency of that space is perhaps precisely why it is overlooked, for it has become naturalized. The purpose of our analysis has been then to de-naturalize these relations and to reconstruct them in the complexity of their organization. The second aim of the analysis has been to try to relate these mechanisms with 5th century Greek thought, especially via the concepts of *mimesis* and of *Khora*. We have not been concerned to try to apply a general doctrine in this analysis, nor impose some general phenomenology or some general semiotics of the theatre. This in turn is for three reasons. Firstly, there seems little point in rendering the particular character of Greek drama except in a specific and historical analysis. We are not concerned with 'the theatrical' in general but simply with this Greek innovation. Secondly our reading of the semiotic material persuades us that much of it is limited in its value as it fails to identify the fundamental complex which is dramatic space. Thirdly, our reason for using the resources of Greek philosophy to render the mechanisms of dramatic representation intelligible rests upon our wish to find contemporary material which would validate the proposition that these mechanisms were thinkable. However we should be clear what we mean by thinkable. We do not mean that people discussed drama in these terms. For the audience it was

enough to ‘understand’ the drama. This response would not have required abstract speculation about how dramatic effects were produced. This will be as true today as it was then. Indeed if the innovation of dramatic space worked in a way which we might parallel with the innovation of film space in the 20th century, it is clear that the spontaneous experience of its effects depends in part upon not asking how the effects are produced. Nevertheless in order for our account of the dramatic mechanisms to be relevant there would have to be some elements of Greek abstract speculation which would have thought in at least something like the ways we have indicated. That is our concern with the issues of *mimesis* and *Khora*. The validation we look for is not whether the ideas are true in some general sense, but whether within the given character of Greek thought something like these mechanisms could be entertained as objects of thought.

Two objections suggest themselves against our argument. The first is that while the concept of *mimesis* enabled us to get some way in specifying the relations of reference in drama, the complexity of drama exceeds the capacity of the concept of the *eidolon* to grasp it. But we have not been looking for an exact and exhaustive parallel. The fact that a cultural phenomenon exceeded the reach of the philosopher is hardly a new point. The second objection is that the abstract speculation considerably post-dates the invention of tragedy. But again we should not be surprised by this. Obviously there will be a time lag between a technical innovation within culture and the development of philosophical speculation concerning relations of representation in general. It is enough to suggest that the complex relations of dramatic representation find an echo in the subsequent reflections of Aristotle and Plato on representation. Any culture in the midst of artistic and representational transformation will take a while to reflect

theoretically upon the situation. Current debates concerning virtual reality would certainly support this proposition. Doubtless our analysis remains incomplete and is open to question. But our aim has been to identify with some precision the fundamental ground of dramatic space. For although this is one of the great innovations within Greek and Western culture, its complex character frequently slips into oblivion.

CHAPTER 4

'Speech': The verbal dimension of drama

In the last two chapters there were various difficulties in the attempt to explore the nature of what we call the space in drama. We were concerned with identifying the particular revolution which enabled drama to be possible. This was as much a logical as a historical reconstruction. We tried to specify the elements, which combined together in an audacious and novel set of conventions employed by the dramatist, executed by the actors and comprehended by the audience. We called this 'the space of drama' though it was less an investigation of literal space and more an investigation of systems of representation. The concept of *mimesis* was a first approximation for this new -as we argue- concept of space. We saw that the attributes of *Khora*, the third kind of space as described by Plato, paralleled many of the characteristics of theatrical space. The analogy seems surprising, as *Khora*, a complete theoretical concept of space, had never been related to any other category of existing place. For it is a space defined by language and not by experience, a space which had never been conceived prior to its written description by Plato.

This chapter might normally have been termed 'The text of drama', but just as in the previous chapter, where the question of literal space turned into a question of representational space, here the traditional question of the nature of the dramatic text will turn into a more complex question of the nature of dramatic discourse. In the first part of this chapter we deal with the form of the tragic text. In the second part we will attempt to explore the relation of the theatrical text -the play- with the theatrical space, as they are the two major systems that interact to 'produce' the performance.

Our attempt at demonstration is based on the *Oresteia*. We will examine different scenes from the three tragedies (*Agamemnon*, *Choephoroi*, *Eumenides*) in order to present our interpretation of the representability of the dramatic space in relation to the text. We shall also attempt to approach the way in which the repeated representation of certain elements (see p. 181-185) is able to formulate a visual narrative, which integrates the three tragedies into one entity. However before exploring the relationship between the two systems (the verbal and the spatial) we follow the development and implications of the appearance of the tragic text as a new category of written text for performance stabilised by the end of sixth century BC. The intention is to argue that this new category of text is mainly defined by its relation to theatrical space and vice versa.

4.1 The form of the tragic text

4.1.1 The structure of tragedy according to Aristotle.

The formal structure of the tragic text is presented first in Aristotle's *Poetics*²⁵⁰ and as Taplin notes '*no other attempt at a complete structural analysis of Greek tragedy is preserved from the scholarship of many centuries after Aristotle.*'²⁵¹ This chapter of the *Poetics*, which according to some contemporary scholars does not '*truly reflect*

²⁵⁰ 1452b '... The following are the parts or separate sections it (tragedy) is divided into quantitatively: Prologue, Episode, Exode, and Choral part, this last again being divided into Parodos and Stasimon, which are found in all tragedies, and songs from the stage and Kommoi, found only in some. The Prologue is the whole section preceding the entrance song (Parodos) of the chorus; and the Exode the whole section after which is no choral song. In the choral part, the Parodos, is the first continuous utterance of the chorus; a Stasimon is a choral ode without anapaestic and trochaic lines²⁵⁰; a Kommos is a lament in which chorus and actors both take part...' JAMES HUTTON: *Aristotle's Poetics. Translated with an Introduction and Notes*, p.56.

²⁵¹ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p.471.

*the way that the tragedies themselves are put together*²⁵², has been broadly quoted even though a careful reading of the described terms and definitions proves that they are inapplicable to fifth century's tragedy. Taplin examines the terms in *Poetics* 1452b17-27, one by one and concludes that the proposed division '*does not do justice to the complexity of fifth century practice, and probably does not preserve the fifth century usage.*'²⁵³ The authorship of this chapter has been later questioned and '*In the nineteenth century it was widely accepted that the chapter is an interpolation...*'²⁵⁴ Regardless of the chapters' authorship or its anachronisms, it is important to keep in mind the two basic categories Aristotle discerns in his analysis of the structure of tragedy: the choral -orchestral - parts and the spoken parts. This basic distinction is based upon the form of the speech's delivery. Now there is no doubt that tragic text is divided into choral parts- *stasima*- and scenes-*episodia*.²⁵⁵ The scenes were performed by actors, in the form of *rhexis* (set speech, monologues of varied length) or of *stichomythia* (exchange of lines between two or three characters, dialogue).²⁵⁶ The choral parts-*stasima*- were odes sung and danced by the chorus and accompanied by music. They were usually '*made up of one or more pairs of stanzas which have the same metrical form, and presumably would have had corresponding music and dance.* These are known as *strophe* and *antistrophe*.'²⁵⁷ As Goldhill suggests²⁵⁸, the

²⁵² TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p. 470.

²⁵³ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p 472.

²⁵⁴ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p 472.

²⁵⁵ 1449b '*Tragedy is an imitation of an action (...) in embellished language, each kind of which is used separately in the different parts; in the mode of actions and not narrated; (...) By 'embellished language' I mean language having rhythm and melody and by 'separately in different parts' I mean that some parts of a play are carried on solely metrical speech, while others again are sung*': HUTTON J., *Aristotle's Poetics*, p. 50.

²⁵⁶ As Goldhill describes it: '*Rhexis is a set speech of varying length (rarely more than a hundred lines) in which a figure offers an exposition of his or her position, or a description of an event, or a reflection on events. Stichomythia is the rapid exchange of mostly single lines between two or more characters.*' GOLDHILL S., *The language of tragedy: Rhetoric and communication*, in *CCDG*, p.127.

²⁵⁷ GOLDHILL S., *The language of tragedy* ..., in *CCGD*, p.128.

²⁵⁸ See GOLDHILL S., *The language of tragedy* ..., in *CCGD*.

exchange between the lyric and the spoken parts corresponds to the exchange of the positions between the community and the individual and constitutes the basic form and 'narrative technique' of classical drama.

Tragedy was composed in a poetic form. The metres varied according to the different parts of the tragic text. Aristotle underlines the moment when dialogue was introduced at performance of Aeschylus²⁵⁹ and discusses the use of the different metres: 1449b *'It was Aeschylus who first increased the number of the actors from one to two and reduced the role of the chorus, giving first place to the dialogue. Sophocles (added) the third actor and (introduced) painted scenery. Again (there was a change) in magnitude; from little plots and ludicrous language (since the change was from the satyr play), tragedy came only late in its developments to assume an air of dignity, and its metres changed from the trochaic tetrameter to the iambic trimeter. Indeed the reason why they used the tetrameter at first place was that their form of poetry was satyric and hence more oriented towards dancing; but as the spoken parts developed, natural instinct discovered the appropriate meter, since of all the metrical forms the iambic trimeter is best adapted for speaking (this is evident, since in talking with another we very often utter iambic trimeter, but seldom dactylic hexameters, or if we do we depart from the tonality of normal speech...)'*²⁶⁰ In the above passage Aristotle runs together the questions of the addition of a second and third actor with the change in the metre from *trochaic tetrameter* to the *iambic trimeter*. We take these issues

²⁵⁹ ' και το δε των υποκριτών πλήθος εξ ενός εις δύο πρώτος Αισχύλος ήγαγε και τα του χορού ηλάττωσε και τον λόγον πρωταγωνιστήν παρεσκεύασεν' The word *logos* is always translated as dialogue but is that correct? As Else in his *Aristotle's Poetics* comments '...τα του χορού ηλάττωσε and τον λόγον πρωταγωνιστήν παρεσκεύασε are complementary, expressing the same idea from opposite sides'; Dialogue becomes more and more important for the dramatic performance.

²⁶⁰ HAVELOCK, E. A., *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, p.187.

separately and show that the terms which Aristotle discusses them need to be clarified.

Aristotle's account of the meaning of the general use of the metre as a form of speech and composition were elaborated in the *Poetics*, '*...1447b, people in general attach the word 'poet' to the name of a particular metre and speak, for example, of elegiac poets and epic poets, calling them poets not on the basis of imitation, but indiscriminately according to the metre they use. This is customary even when what is produced is a versified treatise on medicine or natural science. But Homer and Empedocles have nothing in common except just their metre, and it is right therefore to call the one poet and the other a physical philosopher rather than a poet.*'²⁶¹ It is clear that Aristotle considered metre as just an 'exterior' form and not as the basic criterion that distinguishes poetry from other types of speech. Metre was an appropriate mode of delivery for any kind of speech, even the speech of every day life. '*It is also a fact of life that in literate societies prose is the primary form in which experience is documented, while poetry is more esoteric and sophisticated, a medium to be reserved for special experiences outside the day's work. (...) This conception has to be reversed if we are to understand early Greek poetry. In an oral culture- and Athens had a strong oral tradition- metrical language is part of the day's work.*'²⁶² Different metres indicate different kinds of speech, not poetry as such. The metre adopted for everyday speech is different from that adopted for epic, elegiac poetry or for dithyrambic songs. The variety of metres in tragedy underlines the fact that it consists of different kinds of speech: spoken parts are juxtaposed with choral parts.

²⁶¹ HAVELOCK, E.A., *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, p.188.

²⁶² HAVELOCK, E.A., *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, p.188

Tragedy's changes of metre during its evolution (from *trochaic tetrameter*, which was usually used for satiric performances to *iambic trimeter*, which was used for everyday life) were a process which reflected poets' pursuit of this new genre of performance. In this sense, the change in metre is not an independent innovation but an effect of Aeschylus' addition of the second actor and the introduction of dialogue.

Aristotle's account on the significance of the contribution of Aeschylus to the evolution of drama became the authoritative origin of a tradition of commenting upon the significance of the introduction of dialogue. *'It is evident that Aeschylus is credited here with providing at least a minimum acting company for purposes of dialogue, and this increase of the acting personnel is what makes possible the supremacy of the dialogue over the choral parts... Λόγος is the medium of the specifically mimetic part of tragedy; the victory of λόγος therefore signifies the victory of full realisation of mimesis'*²⁶³ Aristotle refers to these innovations as if they were simple, empirical and self evident. The addition of the second actor and the reduction of the role of the chorus, are described equally with Sophocles' addition of the third actor and the introduction of painted scenery. But it should be clear that the addition of the second actor was not just an addition, but a crucial innovation, because it introduced a new kind of dialogue (*stichomythia*) interconnected with and responsible for the representational action on stage. Of course there was dialogue before the introduction of the second actor, between the one actor and the chorus. But *stichomythia* between the two actors on stage brings to the forefront the representational action which is the radical and fundamental achievement that differentiates drama from all previous types of performance. It will be a fundamental

²⁶³ ELSE G.F., *Aristotle's Poetics*, p. 166.

argument of this chapter that the use of the term 'dialogue' to characterise Aeschylus' innovation is markedly insufficient. Indeed, we will argue that the term dialogue constitutes a major obstacle to a fuller understanding of dramatic discourse. It will be our argument that there is in fact no such thing as dialogue in general and that the import of the term 'dialogue' from 'real life' into the conventions of dramatic discourse is a mistake. It is derived from the view which this thesis seeks to oppose - that the development of theatrical conventions constitutes a progressive approximation to the conditions of 'real' life.

The term 'dialogue' normally refers to the relation between two subjects of enunciation who are also the two addressees. But dramatic dialogue involves at least two addressees in front of an audience. Therefore dramatic 'dialogue' cannot be simply reduced to the question of the number of actors or to the type of their speech. It must be defined as a discourse which involves two direct addressees and one indirect addressee - the audience. Indeed the agonistic dimension which develops through dialogue is itself one of the main characteristics of drama and is possible only through the dialectic of two individuals directly facing each other in front of an audience. Until Aeschylus, one character addresses the community (the chorus or the audience) probably in the form of a descriptive (indirect) speech. Traditional accounts involve the introduction of a second actor and dialogue, which also involves transforming indirect speech towards direct speech. Even in the case that we did not have the form of a direct dialogue- *stichomythia*- but two separate monologues phenomenologically not addressed to each other – a case which we often meet in modern dramaturgy²⁶⁴ - we could have called this phenomenon an 'indirect

²⁶⁴ In many contemporary monologues an indirect dialogue is included between the individual and the society or between the individual and specific imaginary characters. Those

dialogue'. This distinction 'indirect'- 'direct' in drama is a matter which occupies an important part of this chapter. We realise that the categories of the indirect and direct are not misleading in many situations, but in the analysis of drama they are insufficient, because they do not address drama as drama. Certainly the contrast between direct and indirect speech within drama cannot be treated as equivalent to the distinction between monologue and dialogue. The distinction between direct and indirect speech is a grammatical and not a dramatic category. We would argue that all dramatic speech is necessarily dialogic, even if it takes the grammatical form of the indirect: we look for the effects of indirect speech on another character. What is said in drama is always within the open space of dialogue and consequently the opposition cannot be between dialogue and indirect speech but rather between what we have called 'direct dialogue' and 'indirect dialogue'. In the case of tragedy it is clear that we do not have just the deployment of two different theses but an important juxtaposition which mobilises the action. In *Oresteia* the stichomythia between Clytemnestra and Agamemnon, in *Agamemnon* (931-974), between Clytemnestra and Orestes in *Choephoroi* (891-931), or the debate between Athena and the Erinyes in *Eumenides* (778- 1031), one realises how important is the exchange of speech for the further evolution of action and the production of three-dimensional relations on stage.

4.1.2 Three-dimensional speech (the dialogue between two actors in front of an audience)

We need to analyse dramatic speech further in terms of its capacity to create space.

But before we do this we have to dispose of an obstacle which seems to haunt the

characters, even if they do not appear on stage, are represented by this one character on stage, who reproduces their positions- or exact phrases- in his monologue. See for example the

analysis of dramatic speech in many writings. It is the tendency to use standard linguistic terms which are designed to describe everyday discourse as if they were adequate to describe what happens on stage. Segal says '*It is through the deictic interchange that the dramatic world achieves its three-dimensionality*'.²⁶⁵ While one understands what he means, in an important sense his definition is inadequate. A number of points need to be made about this remark, a remark which we take to be typical of a range of authors. We will treat it as symptomatic of a whole way of treating speech on stage. We argue that a term drawn from general linguistics and therefore based on the conditions of 'everyday life' cannot be directly transposed into an analysis of speech on stage. We have already put forward this argument in respect to the question of dialogue. But the point must be pushed further, for now we must question its status as being fundamentally and exclusively linguistic at all. Our argument will be that speech on stage is fundamentally different from speech in everyday life and that instead of coming under the category of language or of discourse, it must ultimately fall under the category of action. In order to pursue this argument we take as a contemporary starting-point the so-called speech-act theory of Austin and Searle²⁶⁶. Originally speech-act theory developed a strong distinction in respect to every day speech between the constative and the performative. The constative includes classes of utterance such as 'it is raining'- descriptions of the world. Other utterances such as 'I promise' were called performative in that they completed an action by the very utterance of the phrase. They are actions completed through the medium of language. Now the conditions of 'everyday life' seem to provide simple and clear distinctions between a description and an action even though both are made with words alone. But, if the same issue was raised in respect to the

monologue of *The Jewish Wife* by BRECHT B., (1938)

²⁶⁵ SEGAL CH., *Interpreting Greek Tragedy, Myth, Poetry, text*, p.90.

theatre, a very different result is produced. In terms of the speech-act theory we would have to class all utterances as performative and in this sense all utterances fall under the class of actions. At a theoretical level we could pose the issue this way: everyday life contains a variety of events and this variety could include constatives and performatives. In everyday life the idea of an action is distinguished from other phenomena - non actions. However, on stage everything is an action in accordance with the fundamentally agonistic character of dramatic space. Another way of putting this is to say that all representations within dramatic space do something, because of the presence of the audience. We would need to reformulate the definition of Segal in view of these points. Having argued that all speech on stage is agonistic and therefore creates space, we have to recognise that this situation is completed by the existence of the audience. The audience is quite a different category from an auditor or an addressee in linguistic terms. In every day life the 'deistic' relation which Segal refers to may be the addressee but may also include what we might call auditors- people who overhear a dialogue. In this case auditors are, as it were, at least initially a kind of extension of the addressee. But in the theatre the situation is quite different. The audience does not have the role of the auditor 'overhearing' a dialogue. The dialogue on stage may have a relative addressee in the form of another actor but what we might call its absolute addressee is the audience. There would be different ways of expressing this difference between the everyday condition of a dialogue between two people and the supplement of others who may overhear them on the one hand, and the dramatic circumstances where dialogue is an agonistic relation between two actors where the audience is the absolute addressee. This can be expressed spatially in the

²⁶⁶ See AUSTIN J.L., *How to do things with words*, and SEARLE J., *Speech Acts*.

observation that the spatial economy of theatrical discourse is radically different from the economy of everyday life as expressed in linguistics or in the semiotics of the text.

Of course, there is a literal sense in which the space of the stage is three-dimensional. What else could it be? But in itself this is an irrelevant point. To define the three-dimensionality of space, as Segal himself suggests, something else has to happen in order to produce a three-dimensionality of dialogue. Where he is mistaken is in assuming naturalistically that this is done simply by introducing a second speaker onto the stage. We would argue by contrast that in the trivial physical sense the stage is already three-dimensional with only one speaker. But it only becomes dramatically three-dimensional when the conditions that we have specified are met - that is when there are two addressees and an audience, all within the framework of the conventions of drama. That and only that is the dramatic definition of three-dimensional speech. It places together the two 'dimensions' of the actors, with the third 'dimension' of the audience inside the specific place of the theatre building. Indeed when we include within this three-dimensionality the necessary role of the audience, we mean the audience of the fifth century,²⁶⁷ that is an agent which participates in the conventions of the drama, and an 'object' of precise calculation by the dramatist. In sum, we argue that the audience is in a general sense an 'actor' within the agonistic frame of dramatic discourse. In a sense this is to insist that the audience is contemporary with the play. Clearly a production of a Greek tragedy today cannot in any way reproduce this relation. In classical drama we face a very unusual and strange spatiality of speech. It may be one is not frequently seen in 'real' life, but nevertheless is the essence of dramatic representation. Again we see that there is no simple way in which

²⁶⁷ See p. 74-85

drama mimics 'real' life, but rather drama is a particular complex of representational conventions, which constitute the singular and astonishing innovation of drama. Any methodological attempt to account for the nature of drama from the development of its capacity to mimic 'real life' will always miss the essential point. This point now allows us to reformulate another well-worn distinction concerning dramatic speech, that is between direct and indirect speech. We repeat that the distinction between direct and indirect speech when applied to drama is not a sufficient or adequate distinction. It is an attempt to map a linguistic distinction on to a dramatic situation, but linguistic distinctions are not designed to deal with the dimension of dramatic representation. While it might be an intelligible distinction in respect to the structure of the dramatic text, it fails to represent the situation of dramatic performance. We deny that there is any absolute distinction between direct and indirect speech when this is delivered by an actor before an audience. To put the point in a different way, the distinction cannot be taken at face value without recognising that it is mediated by the logic of dramatic representation taken as a whole. In terms of our analysis then, the distinction becomes a distinction between direct three-dimensional speech and indirect three-dimensional speech. We hope, our point is not pedantic but rather shows that categories for the analysis of drama must be adequate to the complex conditions of drama. This point can also be extended to the standard distinction between monologue and dialogue. Obviously the two typical modes of speech for the development of a scene by the actors were *rhexis* and *stichomythia*. Our point, is that they both consist of three-dimensional speech. Dialogue (*stichomythia*) corresponds to the category we have named three-dimensional direct speech, while monologue (*rhexis*) to the three-dimensional indirect speech. It is generally accepted that

dialogical direct exchange produces spatiality during performance. We will attempt to argue that monologues as well have the same effect for the audience of drama.

A dramatic monologue, a *rhexis*, is a set speech of varied length which is always addressed directly or indirectly either to a second character or to the chorus, which is always present even if silent. Our argument is that there is a world of difference between a monologue of a *rhapsode* and the monologue of an actor in drama.

Ultimately we argue that there is no such thing as a 'monologue' in drama.

Grammatically speaking, it may appear that Electra's speech (*Cho* 125-150) over the tomb of her father is a short monologue, but the fact that the chorus is present and also that Orestes with Pylades overhear it,²⁶⁸ transforms it logically into a part of a 'dialogue'. We might also immediately assert that since the audience knows that Orestes and Pylades are watching Electra, this 'monologue' is already a dialogue of a specific type. Moreover, the audience experiences the monologue in such a way as to integrate it into the narrative of the whole play. The epic poem on the other hand unfolds within itself and has no other element into which it could be integrated. In drama the *verses* are distributed by the actors within a spatiality,²⁶⁹ a singer of an epic lacks. This does not refer to the physical condition in which they both speak, three-dimensional space, but rather it refers to the fact that the former involves a representation of three-dimensional space. Dramatic three-dimensionality whether considered from the point of view of space or of speech refers to the conventions of drama as a whole rather than the physical conditions of that space or speech.

Theatrical space is representationally three-dimensional in that dramatic three-

²⁶⁸ Here we agree with Taplin's view that Orestes and Pylades do not leave the stage. This device of dramatic technique as Taplin adds '*never became common in Greek Tragedy, and there are very few examples of any other kinds of eavesdropping*'.

²⁶⁹ See p.150-155 (4.2.1 Agamemnon, i, & ii)

dimensional space has to be able to represent any three-dimensional space. Both representational space and the physical space may be three-dimensional but only the representational carries within itself the attribute of representing any space except itself. (The three-dimensionality is always somewhere else.) This must be considered as part of our argument that dramatic space possesses three-dimensionality not through being three-dimensional (which it certainly is) or by having one, two, or three characters on stage, but rather through the whole web of conventions which we are trying to identify. These conventions generate what might be seen as a paradox. In order to represent the three-dimensionality of the world, it is not enough that the actors and the space of the stage are three-dimensional; they must be caught in a complex of representations which in having to represent the world, must represent three-dimensionality rather than just being three-dimensional. This is because the three-dimensionality is an effect for the audience rather than a general condition. On stage the actors must perform three-dimensions rather than simply inhabit three-dimensions. What is finally represented is a three-dimensional reality on stage, which is quite different from the three-dimensional reality of the stage.

It is usually argued that during monologues action is phenomenologically absent from the stage and the actor uses elements of the memory of the character in order to deploy non-visual images. The recitation is supposed to provoke inner images agitating the imagination of the audience in a similar way to reading a book or hearing a poem. It has been often argued that those inner images exist to complement the visuality of stage images. *'Tragedy's most potent contrast is between the seen and the 'un-apparent', between visible and imagined space'*. Ruth Padel explains her view by distinguishing at least two categories of 'the unseen': *'One was the space at a*

*distance, the elsewhere. Places the spectators were invited to imagine when someone came in from far off, 'and the second is the space 'within'; '...within the Skene building, whether it represents a palace or a temple, cave or grove.'*²⁷⁰ We will argue that the spatial representation on stage does not leave a great deal of space for the development of an inner image. By that we do not mean that everything must be necessarily represented on stage but that in a sense everything was.

The issue of the degree of representation (*'how much was represented on stage, and how realistically and how much was left to the imagination on stage'*) has been investigated by Taplin²⁷¹ who discerned two major theories about the subject. On the one hand stands *'a high degree of stylisation with little or no naturalistic representation'* while on the other the possibility of a completely *'naturalistic'* Greek theatre, which means that everything was realistically represented on stage. Our own position is that even if *'the Athenian spectator had a lively imagination which was ready and able to achieve considerable feats under the guidance of a dramatist'*, the nature of dramatic speech was not such to transport the spectator to inner images. Or we might say that drama's *'inner images'* were dependent on what was enacted on stage.²⁷² Segal presents the messenger's memory through his ability to visualise it on stage *'The Messenger's tale not only presents the visual contents of memory; it is also an emblematic account of memory's inner vision. Memory here becomes correlative with vision, a kind of non visual seeing just as writing is a non oral speaking.'*²⁷³ Since the stage can only be some particular space, speech and the place which is represented are much closer than outside drama. Segal's account of the emblematic

²⁷⁰ PADEL R., *Making Space Speak*, in *Nothing to do with Dionysus*, p. 343.

²⁷¹ See TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p. 31.

²⁷² See p. 152-155, (4.2.1, *Agamemnon*, ii)

²⁷³ SEGAL CH., *Interpreting Greek Tragedy, Myth, Poetry, text*. p 97

character of memory in a vision might be correct in so far as an idea of an emblem which mediates the speech. But Segal also seeks to convey something of the problem of simultaneity in dramatic representation. If a character remembers something from the past he does it in words spoken in the present. The words used to recall the memory are, from the point of view of the audience, not a representation of the memory but the memory itself. Reference to times and places beyond the dramatic place nonetheless only find their place within that space. From an audience's point of view, it matters where on the stage, and when on the stage and indeed how on the stage the character 'remembers'. The reference to different times and places still only exists in the dimension of the here and now.²⁷⁴ Dramatic space, quite unlike space in everyday life, is saturated with words which are emblems of those other events. We might conclude from that, that since the stage is a particular place, speech and other represented places are much more marked here than in real life. Segal's account is correct insofar as the speech is mediated by the emblemata of other spaces and times. But ultimately the emblem is an aspect of the space of drama.

Perhaps this will be clearer when we reconnect speech with the question of its articulation through the actor. Attributes of dramatic speech are based upon the dramatic conventions within which the actor acts. The actor's transformation of the verbal into visual is one of the main topics of this chapter.²⁷⁵ We argue that the entire space the audience watches during the performance not only includes the visual representation of the special place the text refers to (for example the palace as represented by the Skene building), but also includes a series of other places which

²⁷⁴ See p. 155-160, (4.2.1, *Agamemnon*., iii)

²⁷⁵ See also p.150-155, (4.2.1 *Agamemnon* i, ii,) as also p. 176-180, (4.2.3 *Eumenides* iii)

are represented on stage through the speech delivered by the actors.²⁷⁶ The perception of this composition by the audience is firmly dependent on the specific conventions that drama by definition presupposes. The fact that the final on stage 'landscape' contributes to the dialogical or indirect speech of the actors can only be justified by the acceptance that dramatic speech, the speech of everyday life or the speech of the epic are essentially different. To explain this differentiation, inevitably we need to return to the problems of reference in drama and to the idea of the actor.²⁷⁷ Outside drama, linguists use distinctions like direct and indirect speech to refer to a division within discourse in which the speaker is or is not an element of the statement. Benveniste provides a useful distinction which can illuminate this point. He distinguishes between '*le sujet de l'annonciation*' and '*le sujet de l'annonce*'. This could be roughly translated as a distinction between 'the subject of the utterance' and 'the subject of the statement'. The subject of the utterance and the subject of the statement may or may not coincide. In the sentence 'I believe in God the Father' the two do indeed coincide. In the sentence 'It was a dark and windy night' the two subjects do not correspond. But as we have already argued, this distinction, however useful, does not carry over into dramatic conventions. In the theatre, the two subjects can never be disengaged. The vehicle of the speech (actor) is always the vehicle of the content of the speech. The body of the actor besides being the instrument dedicated to conveying the poet's word, is also the vehicle of a three-dimensional spatial experience. Since we accept that the subject of the statement and the subject of the utterance are always identified in drama, the actor, as he is a part of the story he

²⁷⁶ See p. 150-155, (4.2.1 *Agamemnon* i, ii,)

²⁷⁷ See p. 87-94

recites, delivers on stage not only the description of what he has experienced but actually a living object of the story: himself.²⁷⁸

What is so striking if obscure about Greek classical sculpture is the way it combines three-dimensional representation of a man with a representation of a man's three-dimensionality. We might say that this latter quality is the real use of three dimensions in sculpture. We might even be tempted to say that a 'real man' lacks this latter quality. The point is that just this relationship characterises what goes on, on stage. It is not only three-dimensional, it represents three-dimensionality and if this is true of bodies and objects upon stage it is also true of the words that are spoken. They not only refer to three-dimensional objects- objects and places in spaces- but they also represent those objects in the very space that has the task of representing three-dimensionality. Thus objects and places referred to on stage have a different life from their reference in everyday speech. They become more 'real' by being uttered within this special field which represents their three-dimensionality. Our argument is ultimately to insist that every object referred to is a 'dramatic object'.

4.1.3 Tragedy's invariable text. The relation of language with space

Clearly the historical origin of classical drama is still the subject of scholarly debate and difference of opinions. Many of the issues involved are beyond the scope of this thesis. Certainly for us the emergence of dialogue in the sense that we reformulated above is a crucial innovation in the articulation of myth. It is indeed one of the decisive means in which the innovation of drama is expressed. We have already

²⁷⁸ See p. 150 -152 (4.2.1, *Agamemnon* i)

considered what is also a crucial condition of the emergence of drama: the use of writing as a mode of composition of the dramatic text. This new form of text has a special relation to what we called three-dimensional speech.

As we have seen in chapter 2²⁷⁹, drama introduces an invariable text for performance. It is important to understand what we mean by an invariable text. Certainly we do not mean to suggest that from the point of view of the dramatist –and indeed the actors– the text may not be one which is changed; the dramatist together with the actors and the chorus may have changed the text throughout rehearsals. The text may also change later subsequent to the performance.²⁸⁰ *‘Yet compositionally, tragedy could never have started by being simply Homeric, and the longer it lasted, the more it would begin to place a distance between itself and the oral model... Yet who shall doubt that even in protoliterate Athens groups of verses as they were put together were committed to writing, to be reviewed, enlarged, revised, as composition progressed’*²⁸¹ This does not undermine the idea of the invariability of the text since all that is meant by invariability is the relationship between the performance and the text which that performance is based upon. The term ‘invariable’ does not indicate an immutable relation of the text to its performance,²⁸² but rather that whatever stage the text is in it exhaustively governs the performance. We repeat again that even if we argue that this text (as with any text aimed to be performed) is theoretically never ‘completed’ until its performance on stage, it involves a fixed, autonomous recorded

²⁷⁹ See ch.2, p. 47-69

²⁸⁰ On this basis there may be a conflict between different texts but this is a point solely concerned with the history of the text as a changeable entity.

²⁸¹ HAVELOCK, E.A., *The Literate Revolution in Greece and its Cultural Consequences*, p. 189

²⁸² We must be careful to distinguish the type of variability which is identified through a historical analysis of the text and the quite different problem of identifying the specific nature between the text and the dramatic performance.

element: an object which will also be in the service of reading, even if '*in the fifth century the text serves primarily as the script for the performance. Tragedians do not seem to think of their work as intended for a reading public until the fourth century.*'

²⁸³ As in the case of music where the notation is not realized until the time it is performed in sound, this text lies in between what we call today the script and any definite performance. It holds the possibility of an ideal performance. As such the text is quite different from what we call a performative text as the Homeric texts or lyric poetry were. Even if we could argue that for some types of poetry, writing was used by the poet at some stage, these 'texts' were always 'open' texts, leaving space to the performer to 'complete' them during the performance. In the case of drama, tragedies may even have been composed in parallel with rehearsals but they were stabilised in a rather concrete form by their original performance at the dramatic festivals.²⁸⁴ *Tragedy is an oral performance, but one controlled by a written text. It is performed in the agonistic and ritual setting that characterises most of early Greek literature. Unlike oral epic, however, tragedy is not recreated afresh on each occasion by the improvisatory art of the aoidos, the oral singer. If the plays were acted again after initial performance at the Dionysiac festival of the Lenaea or the Dionysia (a privilege allowed only to the plays of Aeschylus), they were not recreations requiring a fresh inspiration and a new composition for that occasion, as in oral poetry, but the replication of a fixed text'.²⁸⁵*

²⁸³ Aristotle, *Rhetoric* 3.12, 1413b12ff.; also LESKY A., *Greek Tragedy*. See also Aristotle, *Poetics* 26, 1462a11-17 and ELSE G.F., *Aristotle's Poetics: The Argument*.

²⁸⁴ There is no evidence of texts' corruption by the actors unless the later fourth century. (See also chapter 2)

²⁸⁵ SEGAL CH., *JGT*, p. 77.

The general interest '*in the limits and possibilities of language*' at the end of fifth century '*is reflected in all different genres and disciplines*'.²⁸⁶ With tragedy we have the introduction of a complex new language 'recorded' in what we have called 'invariable' text.²⁸⁷ The role of language was decisive for the composition of the dramatic text and *Oresteia* is one of the finest examples of the powers of language in relation to staged action. One thinks of how the ambiguity of Clytemnestra's words in her welcome speech to her husband (*Ag.* 855-915) and the way she uses language to make Agamemnon walk over the red carpet, prepares indirectly for the later events.²⁸⁸ *Language is not just treated as if it were a transparent medium, offering instant or certain access to meaning or thought of objects; rather the role of language in the production of meaning, in the development of thought, in the uncertainties of reference, is a regular source of debate (...) in the more general awareness of the possibilities and dangers of the tricks and powers of words. The fifth century underwent a linguistic turn.*²⁸⁹ Inevitably tragedy became one of the main fields where the possibilities of language and the double meaning of the words are elevated. Tragedy became a crucial arena where language was interrogated and appreciated.²⁹⁰

²⁸⁶ GOLDHILL S., *Reading Greek Tragedy*, p.2

²⁸⁷ According to Goldhill, there were four elements in particular that make a contribution to the verbal texture of tragedy; a) the tradition of literary language and pre-eminently Homer, b) ritual and the world of religion, c) the world of the democratic law court and Assembly, and d) the interest in the art of rhetoric. All of them are fields requiring a linguistic form. By definition, poetry and religion demand attention to language. Law is interested in the interpretation of language, while Rhetoric is the commitment to the importance of linguistic terms.

²⁸⁸ See also p. 176- 180. (4.2.3, *Eumenides* iii)

²⁸⁹ GOLDHILL S.: *Reading Greek Tragedy*, p.2.

²⁹⁰ We agree with Goldhill that '*Tragedy as a genre, tragic language, is a fundamental element of the fifth century enlightenment - an exploration of the developing public language of the city, performed before the city. Staging the agon, dramatising the corruption and failures of communication, displaying the conflicts of meaning within the public language of the city, provokes the audience of tragedy towards a recognition of language's powers and dangers, fissures and obligations*'. See *Reading Greek Tragedy*, p.7.

'What is said' often hides a meaning different from the 'literal' one. The constant play between 'what is said', 'what is meant' and 'what is acted' is itself performed on stage. Language constructs 'unseen' spaces or figures (the Furies seen only by Orestes in *Cho*, 1048-1062) or organises the representation of places seen by the audience. But how does language's complexity relate to the field of spatial representation? Language and space are two major sign systems that narrate the myth in drama. They also organise the framework of the production of the performance. Text, as we have described, presents a certain structure using different metres and dialects in order to compose the complex network of relations which create performance. But theatrical space, besides being the 'receptacle' which 'includes' performance, also constitutes the code which gives information about the state, origin or destination of the characters. This spatial code contains the basic conventions (See also chapter 2) which poets used to 'build' a (spatial) representational reality. It might initially seem that space as a representational system has limited possibilities compared to language. How could we argue that space as a sign system can be as complex as language? *'The coexistence of verbal and visual representation unique to the theatre involves at nearly every point, dichotomy, contradiction, or paradox in the existence of truth. The conflict between appearance and reality, between what is seen and what is said, is of course a recurrent theme of Greek literature from its earliest beginning (...) Yet the rift between seen and unseen truth acquires a more vivid representation through being enacted before our eyes, in the gestures and movements of living men in real space.'*²⁹¹ Space was formed by different stage objects which often take on more than one meaning as they re-appear in the course of the performance, constituting a visual evolution of the myth.²⁹² If tragic language contributed to the evolution and

²⁹¹ SEGAL, CH., *Interpreting Greek Tragedy*, p.78.

²⁹² See p.176-189, the net as an element found in different forms in all three tragedies of the

richness of speech forms in fifth century Athens²⁹³, dramatic space, as a new genre of space, contributes to a new understanding of the visual and spatial reality. This is a space experienced and conceived through a system of symbolic relationships between the different elements which organise the action. The decoding of the 'truth' during performance comes both from visual and verbal structures. The correspondence between space and language during performance had often proved ambiguous or contradictory, but it was through such kinds of contradictions that the thought of the audience and the teaching of the Athenian citizen of the fifth century BC were promoted.

In the second part of this chapter we examine certain examples from the three tragedies of *Oresteia* in an attempt to investigate the '*multiplicity of the different levels of language*'²⁹⁴ in relation to the organisation of the space and action.

4.2 Verbal and built constructions during performance

4.2.1 *Agamemnon*

i) The 'continuity' of different places - Clytemnestra's beacon's speech

Our concern is with the way in which speech in drama creates sequences between phenomenologically 'different' places. Places which are only verbally deployed and not visually represented are usually considered to belong to an 'unseen' space of the mind. We will argue that those places are in fact 'representable' through the actor's

Oresteia.

²⁹³ 'Tragic language combines contemporary tropes and vocabulary of the public institutions of the city with elements of heroic grandeur which stem both from the epic poetry of the past and the sacral splendor of religious rite', GOLDHILL S., in *CCGD*, p.135.

body. An occasion for such a discussion comes from the famous 'beacon speech' of Clytemnestra, in *Agamemnon*.

At the beginning of the first episode of *Agamemnon*, Clytemnestra announces Agamemnon's victory in Troy and delivers her first speech, (281- 316), *where she describes with vivid imagery the sequence of fiery messages, from Troy to Argos, by which the news of Agamemnon's victory has reached her...*²⁹⁵ In this short monologue of *Agamemnon*, Clytemnestra describes a distant route that spreads beyond the Hellenic geographical boundaries. It is a route that the light of the fire followed to convey the message of victory, from Troy to Argos. Her speech will unfolds the images of mountaintops, of waves of the sea, of hamlets and of palaces. The descriptions reveal for the audience a series of places moving from the one geographical point to the next. Aeschylus proves his ability to enclose, in a few lines a spectrum of spaces. Clytemnestra's speech presents a clear transposition of space from the theatre and the particular place of the action on stage, that is the palace of Agamemnon, to 'other' places. As she describes the route of the fire, the audience has the feeling that by the moment her sight grasps the luminous sign, the beacon is brought on stage. Since Clytemnestra has, by convention, seen the light of the fire, she is describing not only its route but its arrival in Argos and through her the audience 'experience' its arrival on stage. The audience does not see the light. But through the experience Clytemnestra conveys (as she is both the subject of the utterance and the subject of the statement), the audience includes the light with the rest of the elements which compose the three- dimensional representational space during the performance. In some way Clytemnestra becomes herself the sign of the light she is describing.

²⁹⁴ See CCGD, p.137-141.

²⁹⁵ CONACHER, D., J., *Aeschylus' Oresteia*, p. 16.

This would be difficult unless there was a mimetic body-language through which the actor produces visual signs which accorded with his speech. Now we do not have the evidence of a body-language organised as a code and recognisable by the audience. Undoubtedly drama was based on the co-operation between the verbal and the visual elements on stage, and the actor was the main 'vehicle' for both. In a sense the actor's body belongs both to the places which he refers to and to the stage, where it is located during performance. If dramatic speech in all its forms is 'three-dimensional', as we have argued earlier in the chapter, the audience eventually does not simply witness an actor narrating but always 'enacting' a narration, composing theatrical space.

ii) Drama's ability to represent the 'unseen'.

Many scholars have attempted to compare on-stage action and of action described off-stage. Taplin considers that there is a common misconception that '*all the important action in Greek tragedy takes place off stage; on stage it is merely spoken and sung about*'. For him, on the contrary, '*it is the action which takes place on stage which is important, and is part of what the play is about; the action off stage is only of interest in so far as it is given attention on stage*'²⁹⁶. Padel discerns two main categories of non-visible space: the *space at-a-distance*, the *elsewhere*, and the *space within*. She then argues that '*Tragedy's most potent contrast is between the seen and the 'unapparent', between visible and imagined space*'²⁹⁷ (and action) but she agrees with Taplin about the importance of on-stage action and adds '*The act off-stage is fleshed out in the audience's imagination only by attention given to it on-stage*'.²⁹⁸ We will argue that in fact the common distinction between seen and unseen action and space

²⁹⁶ TAPLIN O., *Greek Tragedy in action*, p. 160.

²⁹⁷ PADEL R., *Making Space Speak*, in *NDD*, p. 343.

in drama is fictitious, or that the synthesis of the unseen with the represented does not happen in the audience's mind but on-stage. This is another result of our argument that descriptive speech has not the same status in drama as it does in everyday life. The main difference lies in the fact that speech in drama instead of activating the audience's imagination in order to be transported 'elsewhere'; it transports the 'elsewhere' on-stage. In other kinds of narration the audience is given the privilege and necessity of using their imagination in order to be transported 'elsewhere'. But the audience of drama confronts a different phenomenon. The unique synthesis of 'what is said' together with 'what is acted' happens on stage rather than inside the spectators' mind and this must be explained through the conventions of acting in classical drama.²⁹⁹ Actors 'enact' the dramatist's text on stage no matter if the word of the text is so-called descriptive or dialogic, no matter if they literally act or if they just deliver a speech. The audience synthesises all elements (visual and verbal) of the performance into one entity. Dramatic speech, unlike epic recitation, is never detached from the place from which it is articulated and as a result the spectator is never detached from the theatre to be transported 'elsewhere'. The 'elsewhere' is transported to the stage, composing a new complex set: the palace of Clytemnestra in Argos together with the palace of Troy and the scenes of the destruction of Paris and the Trojans are synthesised into an entity. The exterior facade of the palace (skene facade) and its interior space where Agamemnon's murder happens as described by Cassandra (*Ag*1126- 1129) form one image.

Ultimately our argument here is an attempt to apply to the issue of place what we have already said about the nature of speech. In real life we might say 'there is this

²⁹⁸ PADEL R., *Making Space Speak*, in *NDD*, p. 345.

²⁹⁹ See chapter 2, (p.68-74), as also chapter 4, (p.141-143).

place' and 'there is that place'. Or we might say there is 'here' and 'there'. But the stage can never just be 'here'. It is the function of representing every other place but itself. As a consequence the distinction between 'here and there' now has to go via the loop of a 'here', somewhere that is represented. Or to put it in another way, there cannot be that locational distinction 'here and there' which corresponds to the linguist's distinction between direct and indirect speech. 'There' can only exist here, in words, in actions, scenographically. We might say that in the end there is either a 'here-here' and a 'here-there'. There is no 'here' without the mediation of the conditions of representability in drama.

Some of these apparent paradoxes may be elucidated through by linking the question of the building to the question of dimensionality. At a purely architectural level, the stage representation fails as a piece of architecture in that it is not a three-dimensional structure which encloses space. The palace is represented visually through the exterior facade of the Skene building. But we must insist that the representation of the palace, even if it is only a two-dimensional façade, is nonetheless dramatically three-dimensional (since it follows our definition of dramatic three- dimensionality by being related to at least two addressees and an audience). A further apparent paradox is that it is dramatically three-dimensional precisely because it is physically two-dimensional and bears the function of marking a boundary between two worlds: its outside which is seen on stage and its inside as that which is 'unseen', which is still the one described by Cassandra (*Ag* 1215-1225) in its history. At one level the facade of the palace, as we have said, marks a boundary between two worlds, one seen and one apparently unseen. But as we have already argued, unlike 'real' life, in drama nothing can be unseen in general except as a particular way of organising the drama.

The ordinary distinction between the seen and the unseen is here a distinction between the 'seen' and 'said'. The distinction between the seen and the unseen which the facade apparently draws can only be the representation of a distinction. It is not the distinction itself. Pushing this proposition to its limit we may say that in Greek drama there is no generalised exteriority or indeed interiority. There is what is staged and everything is staged including the 'unseen'. The physical effect the palace has on Cassandra on stage contributes to the overall formulation of the 'image' of the palace.

iii) The representation of space in relation to time. Cassandra's scene (*Ag.* 1035- 1330)

We have indicated the way in which the difference between places is quite different in drama from what it is in real life. At the risk of sounding repetitive, we would add that the same logic applies to the question of time. In Cassandra's scene - the biggest of *Agamemnon* (1072-1342) - we encounter another aspect of this. The palace of Agamemnon is experienced not only visually by its built representation, but also through the perception Cassandra's recitation unfolds. Cassandra reveals in front of the audience the history of the house, not in the form of a steady recitation but through her visions, which include images of the future, the present and the past. She refers to '*the prime curse from Atreus' house* (The feast of Thyestes), *the precise horrors of the immediate future* (the murder of Agamemnon and herself) as also to *the whole sequence of suffering still to come*'³⁰⁰ (Clytemnestra's murder by Orestes) until the trial of Orestes in the court of Areopagus. Cassandra, '*part lyric instrument, part dramatic personality*' as Conacher rightly comments, uses different metrical forms, to represent orally a series of horrific events in the past, and in the immediate and remote

³⁰⁰ CONACHER, D., J., *Aeschylus' Oresteia*, p. 41.

future inside the same palace - the *oikos*. In his literary commentary on *Oresteia*, Conacher notes; '*Cassandra's utterances fall into two main parts: the 'amoibaion' (1072-1177), in which her wild lyrics are answered first by iambic trimeters and then (1121ff) by excited dochmiacs from the chorus; then a series of plain speeches (1178ff) in iambic trimeters-three monologues of increasing length - interspersed by stichomythic passages with the Chorus. Process, cause, and consequence are seen in a single timeless moment*³⁰¹. Cassandra's scene comes in stark contrast to the former glory of the return of Agamemnon. In a moment when the palace seemed to be Agamemnon's shelter, the end-point of a long journey, it is presented as a haunted slaughterhouse. Revealing different aspects of the house during its own history, Cassandra adds to the 'present' image of the house, the 'past' and the 'future' ones and in one of the greatest Aeschylean devices she describes the 'interior' scene of Agamemnon's murder while it happens. Thus '*...Piece by piece the house is daubed with blood, peopled with corpses, ghosts, and demons. Yet Cassandra will still enter it.*³⁰² Soon after Cassandra's withdrawal into the palace, her corpse will be revealed on stage. Taplin describes in detail Cassandra's indented movement stopped by her visions '*...So it seems that Cassandra was going to go off in a quiet obedience at 1072, then on her way she stops at the altar of Apollo at 1080ff. During the second strophic pair she becomes more aware of the house which she has been moving towards; and in the third (1090ff) her horrific visions of what has happened and is to happen are set in the physical framework of the palace itself. So Cassandra's intended movement inside, is halted by the sights which the palace inspires in her...Her murder-filled visions so possess her once they have begun, that it is not until 1136ff that she returns with gradually encroaching speech- metres to her own*

³⁰¹ CONACHER, D., J., *Aeschylus' Oresteia*, p. 41.

³⁰² TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p 319

place³⁰³. Cassandra's reaction in front of the Skene facade - here a boundary between life and death - implies the scenes 'unseen' for the audience. These scenes, of the different time events in the palace, are eventually represented on stage through Cassandra's acting composing the final image of the palace.³⁰⁴ The analysis of the representation of the palace on stage in relation to time can perhaps be advanced by contrasting 'real life' with drama with respect to architecture. Even in 'real' life the same place over time presents different qualities. One and the same room of a house holds different kinds of events. It has been transformed successively into different kinds of spaces. No place can be exhaustively defined independently of the course of the events - the people and the objects involved- throughout its own history. The experience of the event participates in making the notion of a place possible.³⁰⁵ In real life, the distinction between present events and past or future ones which refer to one place, is fairly clear. Past and future events belong to the areas of memory and imagination even when they contribute to the present image of a place. But in drama there is no such clear distinction. Let us say that in real life there is the palace of Agamemnon. If not absolutely permanent, it is sufficiently enduring to create an order of temporality that is far greater than the life cycles of its many inhabitants. It acquires a sense of permanence with respect to the events which have occurred there. 'Here' and 'now' are not isomorphic. The term 'here' can refer to a physical space which has, does, and will enclose events. On stage, however, there is a representation of the palace and this scenic device has a different temporal relation to events than does

³⁰³ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p.319

³⁰⁴ The result could be compared with an image composed by the overlapping of different transparent sheets of paper, each of them representing different moments in time, each of them giving a different precise detail, the more recent the event, the higher up the paper. The final image shows more faintly the more distanced events and more vividly the latest ones.

³⁰⁵ See Conclusion, p. 199 as also TSCHUMI B., *Event Architecture*, in *Architecture in transition, between Deconstruction and New Modernism*, ed. Noever P., p. 127.

architecture. Essentially the dramatic representation of the palace is the representation of the palace as a place that is defined by different moments in time. It is not as in real life where the architectural dimension of permanence is powerful, but it is rather the representation of a particular place during a particular event. In this sense the Skene building is not a building which constitutes an identical background of different events. It is not a single representation which contains different places/events. The representation of the palace belongs to the order of narrative rather than the order of permanence. The stage (Skene / orchestra) is not so much a representation of the building but an 'emblem' of the building. The Skene is a 'narrative vehicle' for places rather than the place itself. This again follows from its nature of being a place that can only represent other places. Therefore a representation of a building cannot be architectural because it bears a completely different relation to temporality. It cannot achieve the ontological autonomy of a real building because it has no independent temporality. Its reality is distributed between a place and an event, a distribution which is fixed in the narrative of the play as such. The palace on stage is neither present nor absent on its own account. It exists dramatically by being indicated.

The question of time must again be seen within the complexity of the conventions of drama. The linguist is used to thinking that the reference of tenses applies to the conditions of the past, of the present and of the future. But within drama the relations of the tenses to the referent is quite different. All times belong to the present of the enunciation. We link what we have already argued about the direct character of speech to the dramatically eternal present (- tense) of speech. It is not that tense in drama loses reference but it is different from everyday life. We are dealing with what we may call a 'present-present', a 'present-past' and a 'present-future'. This

referent, governed by the over determination of the category present, is not really a linguistic phenomenon. It is again an effect of the dramatic conventions, taken as an 'ensemble'. The future and the past are staged just as much as the present is. This also lends a complexity to our understanding of the scenery of the palace of Agamemnon. It is not a representation of the palace in the 'now', as opposed to Cassandra's representation of the palace in the past and in the future. It is each of them as an emblem of the words which she speaks. As such the representation of the palace has itself no tense. It contains the events – past, present, future- and is all the palaces being referred to.

We have attempted to analyse the relations between the visually enacted places and those 'unseen', described by the actor. We have argued that they are both 'represented' on stage during performance, resulting in theatrical space. We have also seen how one and the same place is 'composed' by the overlapping of different or even opposed images (for example, the palace as shelter and the palace as slaughter-house). The next tragedy of the trilogy, *Choephoroi*, provides an opportunity to follow the relations between verbal and spatial structures.

4.2.2. *Choephoroi*

Choephoroi is the second tragedy of the trilogy and is usually considered as the mirror tragedy of *Agamemnon*. There is an obvious equivalence between the general structure of the two plots, even though the roles (male - female, host - visitor, victim - victimiser) are inverted. According to the short presentation Taplin gives us of the structure of the play '.... *Cho. is made in two distinct halves. The first, which is set at*

*the tomb of Agamemnon, is dominated by a huge 23-stanza lyric dialogue lament and invocation (306-478); before and after it Orestes and Electra hatch their plot (...). Then with a change of scene to the palace, the pace changes radically: four separated acts culminate in the murder of Aegisthus and Clytemnestra, all within the space of 300 lines (653-935)' ³⁰⁶. Choephoroi lacks the static images (tableaux)³⁰⁷ and the big recited parts that characterise Agamemnon. It is a shorter tragedy (the length of *Cho.* is 1075v instead of *Ag.* 1670v) and the action is quicker, producing a continuously transformed theatrical space.*

i) The meaning of the visual co-existence of different places on stage.

The first part of the tragedy (*Cho.* 1-584) is enacted at the site of the tomb of Agamemnon and the second (*Cho.* 651- 1076) in front of Agamemnon's palace. Various scholars have concluded that both places (palace /Skene building and tomb) co-exist on stage during the whole of the tragedy. The action moves from the one place (the tomb) to the next (the palace) according to the evolution of the play, without the need to change 'scenery'. As Taplin argues, it is very unlikely that '*bits of scenery were actually removed or brought on*' during the shift from the tomb to the palace, and '*... most commentators now agree that in the middle of Cho, the scene changes or 'refocuses'*³⁰⁸...' Movement from one place to another during the course of the same tragedy was relatively uncommon and if there is no visual signification for a change, the audience selectively focuses on each of the two represented places, guided

³⁰⁶ TAPLIN O., *Greek Tragedy in Action*, 1978, p. 24.

³⁰⁷ See *Greek Tragedy in Action*, by Taplin, p.101: '*By tableaux I mean those places where there is not only a lack of dramatic movement, but also some or all of the visual constituents of a scene are held still for a longer or a shorter time in a combination which captures or epitomises a particular state of affairs.*'

³⁰⁸ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p. 339.

only by the action. We interpret this fact, of the scenery representing both the palace and the tomb on the stage together, far from representing a negligence in respect to naturalism, confirms our analysis of the drama as taking place in a space whose nature is to represent other places. There is nothing strange about this proto-collage of different places on the stage. It parallels bringing other places to the stage through the character's speech.

There are two possible views about the 'role' of the Skene building during the first part of the tragedy which is enacted at the tomb: firstly, that the Skene did not yet represent the palace, and therefore that it stands as a neutral structure 'in attendance'. Secondly, that the Skene did represent the palace.³⁰⁹ We will argue that both aspects have the same effect for the audience. Whatever the Skene's role during the first part, it is present not only in a literal sense but more importantly in a dramatic sense. If one 'reads' the stage literally, it might be concluded that the tomb is physically in front of the palace. But, of course, there is no literal co-existence or proximity of the two places. The scene of the tomb is set away from the palace, as is implied several times in the text.³¹⁰ So what is it that is represented on stage if it is not the physical proximity of the tomb to the palace? It can only be what we might call the dramatic proximity. That these two elements go together means they need to be juxtaposed so that they mutually penetrate each other with their dramatic meaning. As against 'naturalism', we might look to the nature of collage to understand the effects of this

³⁰⁹ See TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus* where he argues that the Skene - palace is refuted from the stage, by convention

³¹⁰ See TAPLIN O., *SA, Chorus comes on from the side (see 22) and εκ δομών is no more a sign that the palace is on stage(...). Lines 264ff are a sign that the scene is set away from the palace rather than outside.... Moreover, neither of Orestes references to the επκαίονος πύλας (561,571) has any deictic reference, whereas, when he re-enters at 653, he goes straight up to them and knocks naming them in the first line (653) and so indicating that he has now arrived at the palace formerly referred to verbally.*

arrangement. The technique of collage results in a space in which otherwise distanced objects can be brought together in such a way that particular effects are generated. There seems no reason to suppose that to experience the scenery of the palace one must 'unfocus' one's eye from the tomb. It is not a question of 'blocking out' one or other of the representational places. It is rather that they function together in terms of the drama. In order to understand the dramatic space of the stage it is important to repeat that the stage is not itself a place, but the condition of representing all other places. Once this is accepted there should be no surprise that it can represent more than one place at the same time. We find it difficult to think that certain spaces have particular conditions of representation because we think of a place as being irreducibly singular and 'positive'. But this thought is an obstacle to penetrating the nature of Greek theatrical space where the condition is that the stage is empty of place, save of its capacity to represent all other places.

We should add that the view that visual presence (or absence) in Greek classical drama does not necessarily imply dramatic presence (or absence) and this applies not only to the stage objects but also to actors. When Orestes and Pylades go into hiding (*Cho.* v.22), it is not clear whether they are literally hidden (and where), whether they leave the stage, or if they remain visible on stage but considered as hidden (absent). All seem equally possible. Taplin takes the view that they stay in hiding and examines all possible places where they could hide; '*It is possible that there was some scenery where they could hide; but more likely.... they hid in the doorway. We cannot tell; but probably we can reject ...that they went away down an eisodos...*'.³¹¹ We believe that there is no reason for the actors to be hidden. They become 'dramatically' hidden by

³¹¹ TAPLIN O., *SA*, p.335- 336

convention, even if they remain on stage, even visible to the audience for some lines. We could add to Taplin's argument '*after all we cannot say that anything in a play 'demands' or 'necessitates' representation on stage*',³¹² that representation on stage does not necessarily mean dramatic presence - as against naturalism, as we have already argued.

ii) The representation of the representation; tomb - the place of the dead

The place which is inhabited by a ritual, a ceremony, even an invocation, is always a place particularly charged, a place where different levels are able to communicate. Thus, there was always a need for organised places for ritual or festival activities, (temples, sacred sites, routes of certain processions), the character of which varied depending on the specific context of these activities. The famous 'Great *Kommos*'³¹³ of *Choephoroi* (Cho 306-478) is not the enactment of a strictly defined ceremony, but rather Electra's, Orestes's and the chorus's 'spontaneous' mourning and invocation to the dead Agamemnon. '*This tripartite kommos, with its shifting patterns of lament and urgency, of horror and vengeful imprecation, and with its blend of lyric and dramatic elements, is an ideal instrument for this complex arousal of the living and the dead.*'³¹⁴ The action is organised around a centre (the tomb) but the stage is extended outside the theatre's physical limits to the space where action and speech is addressed, to what we might call 'the space of the dead'. '*Orestes and Electra pray to Agamemnon beneath the ground, but there is no visible marker of his presence (besides the tomb). Space has ceased to be absolute and words can quickly redefine*

³¹² TAPLIN O., *SA*, p.336

³¹³ Taplin informs us that *Kommos* 'is a certain kind of lyric dialogue- a dirge; this is what the definition of *Poetics* also says - *θρήνος*.' *SA*, p. 474

³¹⁴ CONACHER, D.J., *AO*, p. 113.

it³¹⁵. Thus both choreography and speech constantly re-organise the existing spatial order, and the stage, besides being the place of intense action, is transformed at the end of the first part of *Cho*, into a space in 'attendance' for the revenge to come. The lyric-dramatic development of the *Kommos* '*fuses all meanings into a single climactic act*'³¹⁶ and leads gradually to the double murder of Clytemnestra and Aegisthus.

The marker of the tomb is the central element of the stage for the whole first part of the tragedy. '*Orestes, Electra, and the chorus call at length upon Agamemnon, who lies beneath the ground, and it is an obvious inference that the strongest point within the performance space, the orchestra centre, was used*'.³¹⁷ The tomb 'attracts' the actors and the chorus's verbal and choreographic formulations. It becomes the central addressee of the whole action. But the tomb, besides being the sign of 'the dead Agamemnon', is also the marker of the place where now the dead belong. It represents 'here' the 'elsewhere'. Moreover, it is also a sign of everyday life in fifth century Athens.³¹⁸ The idea of representing a tomb on stage carries with it a unique problem for Greek drama. We can express the problem as follows: we have already said that the stage is that place which is not a place in and of itself, but rather the place which has the capacity to represent other places. In the case of the palace this does not create any particular problem, but when we think of the tomb there is an additional problem. For the tomb as a monument is itself already a representation of the dead person who is now in 'another' place: Hades. How can the stage represent the

³¹⁵ WILES D., *TA*, p. 170.

³¹⁶ CONACHER, D.J., *AO*, p.110.

³¹⁷ WILES D., *TA*, p. 82.

³¹⁸ See JOHNSTON S., *Restless Dead*, p. 41-42: '*A grave marker (sema or stele) often was set up at some time after burial; according to Cicero, post-Solonian Athenian funerary laws attempted to restrict the size or grandeur of these markers. (These laws probably date to the last third of the sixth century). The stele or sema subsequently might be decorated with ribbons, myrtle branches or fillets of coloured wool*'.

'elsewhere' of another representation, the tomb? Various scholars believe that the tomb may have been identified with the *thymele*³¹⁹. Wiles believes that '*The site of the thymele at the centre of the orchestra is already imbued with a religious charge and the focus of the theatre makes this the natural place to site the tomb or suppliant's altar required in so many places*'.³²⁰ We could say that the sign of the tomb on stage is a representation of a representation but in order to control the indefinite regress of this representation -what is known as *mis en abime*- the regress is short-circuited back to the reality of the *thymele*. We do not know if the *thymele* was indeed serving as the representation of the tomb by itself. We face the same problem in other tragedies (*Persae*, *Bacchae*, *Helen*). But if it was, then we will have to reformulate more precisely our conception of theatrical space.

Arnott thinks that '*the use of the altar solves all difficulties*' as the tomb could not have been realistically shown because '*it could have been impossible to move it during the play and if it remained it would only confuse the audience*'. He agrees that '*While Orestes and Electra are praying there, it is the tomb, when the action shifts, it merges once more into the general architectural background and has no special importance*'.³²¹ Therefore, Arnott argues that the audience is able to neglect a permanent element of the stage - here the altar. Given our former argument about the

³¹⁹ The *thymele* is the permanent altar at the center of the orchestra. Arnott in *Greek Scenic Conventions*, 1962, p.43 adds 'Pollux (iv.101) describes pre- dramatic dances around an altar, and when he goes on to discuss the theatre gives the orchestral altar the name *thymele*'. Another source of information are vase paintings, even if, as Wiles (TA, p.189) notes, 'vase paintings do not depict tragedies or satyr plays in performance, we have a large corpus of south Italian vases which do depict a mode of comic performance'. A vase fragment from Apulia 375-350 BC (Taplin *Comic Angels*, fig.21,) depicts a comic actor as Electra at the tomb of Agamemnon. Wiles (TA, p.191) describes it: 'A tall stele with a hand band tied around it to secure offerings is reminiscent of several mid-fifth century renderings of the tomb. Since tomb-stone and altar are physically distinct on comic vases, we are encouraged to reject the possibility that a permanent stage *thymele* served unaided the tomb in the *Oresteia*'.

coexistence of the different places on stage, we believe his argument is wrong. As we accept that in any case the central and charged sign of the tomb- *thymele* or not- coexists permanently with the palace at least until the end of the tragedy, we believe that it never escapes the audience's mind. On the contrary it contributes indirectly to the action as a reminder of Orestes' duty. And that is an important anti-naturalistic convention as we have already argued.

We have said that theatrical space is a place which can represent all other places. But in the case of representing the tomb, this singular object is already representable on stage by the *thymele* and therefore ultimately is always already represented. As in any signifying system, there must always be one signifier which counts as what Levi-Strauss calls the '*floating signifier*'. In order to function as a place which represents all other places, there must always be one signification, what Levi-Strauss calls '*the zero function of signification*' which is left over after the signification of other dramatic elements. We could possibly argue that if the *thymele* was in general identified with the tomb in the audience's mind, then the *thymele* both represents the tomb and is, as it were, the condition of all other representations which the stage makes possible. In a way this is why uniquely the tomb cannot be represented; since it is already a representation, it can only be presented. Elsewhere we have the representation of objects, here we can only have the objectification of a representation.

The scene of the invocation is different from any other scene we have previously examined, in the sense that it physically includes another space: this undefined 'other

³²⁰ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.188.

³²¹ ARNOTT P. D., *Greek Scenic Conventions*, p.59.

space' whose representation is the sign of the tomb. Here we need to explain further the relationship of the tomb to the place of Hades. The place of the tomb was primarily the place of the dead body which was separated from the *psyche*, which belonged to Hades. *'Although belief in the existence of Hades was certainly widespread among the Athenians of the period, it did not exclude the alternative belief in the dead having access to the tomb (...)'*,³²² The tomb was the place where the living went in order to communicate with the dead. *'The dead are reachable by the living and their destinies are affected by the quality of attendance received at the hands of close relatives'*³²³ The place of the tomb was then transformed into a channel which related two worlds. *'By uniting these two standards, by giving the living power over the condition of the dead and the dead a measure of control over the destinies of the living, Athenian eschatology reinforced a view of the essential and enduring nature of family ties (...) and of our inalienable connections with those on the other side...'*³²⁴. In just a small fragment of the enacted space - the tomb - is presented the entity of the 'elsewhere'. The theatre building is a special type of receptacle, which 'includes' this 'undefined' space towards which all action is addressed. What is again clear in this scene is the identification of the 'persons of the absence' (the dead and the gods) with the space to which they supposedly belong. Mortals address the dead and the gods, by addressing the particular place they established for them, temples or tombs. The formulation of this scene reveals once more stage's possibility to be expanded, multiplied, to be a 'part' (tomb: a part of another space) and to include a 'whole' (Hades) into the receptacle of the theatre.

4.2.3 *Eumenides*

³²² GARLAND R., *The Greek Way of Death*, p. 120.

³²³ GARLAND R., *The Greek Way of Death*, p. 120

The main subject of the *Oresteia*'s last tragedy *Eumenides* is Orestes' trial for his mother's murder and his final acquittal by the court of the Areopagus in Athens. We will agree with most scholars who note that of all of the tragedies of *Oresteia*, this is the most complex in respect to changes of dramatic space and time. *Eum* is enacted in three different places; the first at Delphi and the following two in Athens. As Taplin explains '*The scene from 235 is set near the παλαιόν βέτας of Athena*³²⁵, on the Acropolis, inside Athena's temple. The trial is set away from Acropolis, on the site of Areopagus, *'and in the open air. (...) Yet there has been fierce controversy over this, and even large-scale textual corruption has been preferred to a change of scene*³²⁶. The reason for this controversy lies in the way the change from one place to an other occurred on stage. But as Taplin suggests '*if it is once accepted that in Aeschylus the scene could refocus without having overtly changed at any particular moment (see Pers 598c) then the difficulty dissolves... Possibly the statue -of Athena - was taken off during the song, and at some point benches, voting urns, etc. were brought on. But these stage details are not a prerequisite of the change of scene.*³²⁷ We agree with Taplin, since we argue that the representation of different places was not necessarily depicted scenographically.

We should note that *Eum* also presents the largest number of characters in the trilogy: there are five characters (Pythia, Orestes, Clytemnestra's *eidolon*, Athena and Apollo) and two bodies of chorus: the Erinyes, which by the end of the tragedy will be transformed and renamed Eumenides and the *Propompoi*, a new body of chorus who

³²⁴ GARLAND R., *The Greek Way of Death*, p. 120.

³²⁵ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p.390.

³²⁶ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p.391.

³²⁷ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p.391.

will escort the Eumenides off the stage at the end of the tragedy. There are also the jurors of the trial, who as mentioned in the text (798-710) clearly, participated in the stage action even if they never spoke.³²⁸

i) Communication between 'different' places

The instance where two different places (the tomb and the palace of Agamemnon) in *Cho* co-existed on stage gave us the opportunity to strengthen our argument about the anti-naturalistic character of dramatic space, an argument already formed in the analysis of the examples of *Agamemnon*. We also had the opportunity to argue about the ability of the stage (Skene / orchestra) to include an entire special place - the place of the dead - through the marker of the tomb in *Cho*. In this tragedy we are faced with the case where two 'different' places are not only represented simultaneously but literally co-act, allowing the communication of their 'inhabitants'. In lines 93-142, Clytemnestra's *eidolon* speaks from 'the space of a dream'³²⁹ (the chorus' dream) which is lying inside Apollo's oracle at Delphi.³³⁰ For some lines (94-139) on stage there is both the representation of the dream of the chorus (Clytemnestra's *eidolon*)³³¹

³²⁸ It is probable, as Hermann argues, that it is the jurors who become the supplementary chorus of *Propompoi*.

³²⁹ See line 116 : 'ὅναρ γὰρ υμᾶς νῦν Κλυταιμνήστρα καλῶ'; 'Inside from a dream, me, Clytemnestra, I am calling you.'

³³⁰ See lines 46-59, where Pythia describes them as she exits from the Apollo temple.

³³¹ . Much has been argued about the entrance of Clytemnestra's *eidolon*. It has been disputed whether or not such a device as the one which could permit the entrance from the ground was in use during the time of the first performance of *Oresteia*. Even if this is supported by the text, we lack archaeological evidence. Taplin in the appendix of his *SA*, (p.447) notes : 'Among the many entries in Pollux which were rejected during the 1890s were the χαρώνιοι κλίμακες. While stone subterranean steps have been found in a few theatres, notably in the fourth century theatre of Eretria and Sicyon(...), no trace of any such monumental construction has been found at Athens, and all the chief authorities have rejected this method of entry. But unlike most of the scenic features from late testimonia(...) the subterranean steps are not totally without support from the plays. Above all it is clear that the ghost of Darius is to be imagined as emerging upwards at *A. Pers.* 681, and departing down again at 842. The stage directions of Clytemnestra in *Eum* are not clear, but she might have

and the chorus being asleep. The exact moment of the chorus's entrance has been much discussed within scholarship and there are two main views: firstly that the chorus first appears asleep on the *ekkyklema*³³² at line 94, most probably together with Clytemnestra's *eidolon*. In this case the audience watches on the *ekkyklema* both the chorus and Clytemnestra's *eidolon* for more than 40 lines (*Eum* 94 - 140). Thus the 'interior' space of the dream is situated together with the interior space of the oracle. The second view favours a later entrance at line 140. Taplin notes that '*the arguments for a later entry are decisively stronger*'³³³. Clytemnestra appears alone on stage but the audience is able to hear the chorus's reactions through their cries (*Eum* 117, 120, 123, 126, 129) even before its entrance. We see that even in the case where the chorus is off stage, it is in constant communication with Clytemnestra's *eidolon* speech; The chorus hears Clytemnestra's orders and the audience hears its reactions. We will consider a third option where we have again the case of Clytemnestra's sharing the stage with the chorus for some lines. It is possible for the chorus to appear on the *ekkyklema* at line 130, when it first speaks. Thus both the chorus and Clytemnestra co-exist on stage during Clytemnestra's last speech (*Eum* 130-139) and as she leaves the stage, the chorus leaves the *ekkyklema* and sings the *parodos*.

What is important to stress in our argument, is the fact that in all of the above three cases we are dealing with the communication of different, non 'compatible' places, 'interior' spaces, not be seen by the public: one is the interior space of the oracle, and

used the steps if any were available.

³³² Taplin argues that the chorus enters on stage, at line 140, outside the oracle awakened by Clytemnestra's *eidolon*, even if Apollo at line 180 orders the chorus to come out of his oracle (*απαλλάσσεσθε μαντικῶν μυχῶν...*) Taplin believes that the god refers to the general site of the oracle and not to its interior. We agree with Taplin that it is almost impossible for the chorus to be on the *ekkyklema* during all the *parodos* before the entrance of Apollo, but we believe that it might be possible for the chorus to be considered as if inside the oracle without the help of the *ekkyklema*.

the other the interior space of the mind - the space of a dream. On one level the dream is given a distinctive place on stage. It is the place from which Clytemnestra's *eidolon* speaks³³⁴. What we might observe here goes beyond our argument that the space of drama is to represent all the places from which utterances are made. What we have here is a demonstration that the conventions of drama are beginning themselves to affect the categories whereby Greeks understood what we would think of as *psychic* phenomena. The idea that a dream must be represented as a place from which an utterance can be made becomes not only a dramatic convention by itself but a conventional way of thinking about dreaming. The power of the stage lies not in its representational capacity in a naturalistic sense, but in its capacity to populate the world with places (*Topoi*) in an Aristotelian sense, which can then be represented by the singular capacity of the stage: that is, to represent any place except itself. A place in drama, in our case the place of dream, is not simply somewhere from which someone speaks, but rather a place which emerges from 'somewhere' through the utterance which serves to baptise it as a place. A further point we would like to underline in this scene is the special relation of the places represented with the articulated speech. As it is very improbable that additional scenographic elements were used on stage in order to signal the difference between the two 'different' areas (the interior of the oracle and the place of the dream), we argue that the space is represented only through the word of its inhabitants. Thus, the place of the dream is identified with Clytemnestra's *eidolon* and the interior of the oracle with the body of the chorus. This identification between space and speech is for us further evidence that speech in classical drama is able by convention to produce three-dimensionality.

³³³ See *SA*, p.369-374.

³³⁴ This place is identified with Clytemnestra's *eidolon*, whether she appears on stage or not. According to Flichinger (see Taplin *SA*, p. 366), Clytemnestra's *eidolon* was not seen by the audience and she was only a voice. In any case, her speech comes from a place, the place of

The verbal and the spatial systems which organise performance not only collaborate, or co-function, but presuppose each other for the evolution of the play. The audience watches the chorus communicate with Clytemnestra and the two different places are only represented through their 'dialogue'. What is also at stake here is what is represented on the stage. We have argued that the characteristic of dramatic space is to represent all other spaces except itself. We hope by now that this argument is clear. We have also argued that as a consequence of this, the stage is not governed by naturalistic conventions of theatrical space in which the representation of one place would exclude the simultaneous representation of another place. On the contrary, we have seen the way in which two different places can be represented in a space whose modern term would be that of the collage. What may still be ambiguous is to consider that this might be able to define a place as a distinct site plus its object (temple or palace). However, within that modern sense, the representation of the palace or temple will be governed essentially by a naturalistic reproduction of the audience's perception of the object. Essentially this means that they will see the exterior of whatever part of the structure would be visible to perception. But there is no reason to suppose that classical drama was governed by such naturalistic forms of representation. We can demonstrate this by referring to the division of the interior/exterior in which in modern naturalistic conventions an interior is no more represented on the stage than it is in real life. Certainly fifth-century Athenians made a clear and decisive distinction between interior and exterior but that did not mean that they could not be simultaneously represented, since both of them are elements of the place. What we see here is the dominance of the idea of the place in governing representation rather than the illusionism of perception.

the dream.

ii) Appearances and transformations

In this tragedy we deal with the transformation of the body of the chorus from the vindictive deities of the beginning of the tragedy (Erinyes) to the protective goddesses at the end (Eumenides). The moment of change (*Eum* 916) comes after a debate (*Eum* 77- 916) when Athena manages to persuade them not to take revenge on the city for the acquittal of Orestes by the court of Areopagus. The chorus agrees to stay in Athens and receive honours from the Athenian citizens ever after, replacing curses with blessings. This change is visually signified by the red clothes, the (formerly black dressed) members of the chorus wear (*Eum* 1028). The exit of the chorus is a glorifying scene: the Erinyes - Eumenides leave the stage accompanied by a second body of chorus - the *Propompoi* - under the light of their torches. The evolution of the dramatic character of the chorus in this tragedy is built on the interaction between the visual and verbal dimension of the performance. As we have argued the Erinyes do not appear on stage at least until line 130. In some sense they 'reveal' themselves progressively as the tragedy evolves but their invisible presence is significant even from the end of the previous tragedy, *Cho*. Their gradual 'revelation' is structured through different stages: they are firstly mentioned by Orestes, who leaves the stage saying he is hunted by them in *Cho*. '*First in Cho the Erinyes are present but not seen; we have only Orestes' few but gruesome words (1048-50, 1057f.). Yet their speed and efficiency are vividly conveyed, and this bridges the gap to the next play (cf. Cho 1063)*'³³⁵. In the next tragedy, Aeschylus prepares for their appearance in different ways. Pythia describes them asleep around Orestes inside Apollo's' oracle.

³³⁵ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p. 371.

'...We see the devastating effect that the mere sight of them has on Pythia (see 34) and we hear her detailed description (49-59)'.³³⁶ Their powerful description is so strong and frightening that it makes us wonder how it compared to their later entrance. But before their entrance the audience is prepared from their horrified cries. *'During the scene of Clytemnestra we would then only hear the Erinyes at 117-30. These bloodcurdling noises issuing from horrors yet unseen would be very effective. (...) All these reactions, descriptions and noises make a highly dramatic preparation of various and increasing anticipation for the long-delayed revelation itself'*.³³⁷ When they finally appear on stage at line 130 (or 140) their image is complete. Erinyes are first mentioned in the last tragedy *Cho*, then they are formulated by Pythia's descriptions (*Eum* 46-59), later they become present through their cries and finally they appear on stage, where they remain until their final transformation to Eumenides at the end of the tragedy. This chain of events proves nothing less than the distinctively elaborated relationship between what is 'heard' and what is 'seen', which permits the chorus not just suddenly to appear but to be gradually formulated. What becomes once more clear is that the Erinyes' presence is not identified with their visual representation. They are present when invisible, they force Orestes to leave Argos in *Cho*, they are present through Pythia's description and they are present through the sound of their cries before their entrance, organising and constantly reformulating the stage. *'Making them visible in the third play, Aeschylus did not mean they were not there before. On the contrary, it validated the lively visions of Cassandra and Orestes. Normally, before and after the Eumenides, the Erinyes are external but unseen'*.³³⁸

³³⁶ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p. 371.

³³⁷ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p. 372.

We have argued before, that the relations between what is seen and what is heard have a different nature in Greek drama from naturalistic drama. We would like to repeat our view that insofar as naturalistic drama has an explicit intention to mimic the form that reality takes in 'everyday life', we may say that the linguists' distinction between direct and indirect speech might seem appropriate for naturalistic drama. But in Greek drama, characterised as it is by what we have called three-dimensional speech, this distinction, as we have argued, is not appropriate. Given the very definition of 'three-dimensional speech', we can argue the same idea refers to the idea of place on stage. In direct speech the idea of a place has only one reference: it refers to what is elsewhere, somewhere else. But this reference is not in an important sense made to a place, whereas in Greek drama the reference is always in an important sense made from 'here': the empty space of representation of the stage. This has the effect of presenting the 'elsewhere' here. There is no convention which permits a speech/act to originate from abstract space. They always come from a represented place. This profoundly affects the ratio between what is seen and what is heard. Both what is seen and what is heard are equally present in a represented place. Certainly there will be a difference between the two, but neither have a claim to be closer to some real presence. In this case (of the gradual appearance of the Erinyes) there is a postponement of the moment before they became a spectacle on the stage but this does not mean that their presence was less 'real' when it belonged simply to the category of the heard. The distinction in Greek drama is not so much between the voice's capacity to refer to events which occur elsewhere and the presence of what is seen, but rather refers to a differential between two modes, each of which are equally subject to location, but in which the mode of being placed is different.

³³⁸ PADEL R., *In and Out of the Mind, Greek Images of the Tragic Self*, p. 185.

iii) The meaning of colour red throughout the trilogy

The transformation of the Erinyes into Eumenides at the end of the trilogy is a dramatic device which has been much discussed by scholarship.³³⁹ We are now going to analyse this transformation as the end-point of a visual procedure which concerns the symbolic recurrence of the colour red³⁴⁰ during the evolution of the trilogy. One of Lebeck's first statements in the introduction to her book *The Oresteia* concerns the recurrence of certain images which, as she argues, have the capacity to form larger units: 'The images of the *Oresteia* are not isolated units which can be examined separately. Each one is part of a larger whole; a system of kindred imagery. They are connected to one another by verbal similarity rather than verbal duplication. Formulaic (verbatim) repetition is rare, except in the case of single 'key' words; it is replaced by associative or reminiscent repetition'.³⁴¹ What she then attempts is a new reading of the trilogy through the meaning of each of the images she refers to. She firstly examines their immediate context and then she tries to approach them 'as part of gradual development and cumulative repetition' not only within the individual play but also within the course of the whole trilogy. Even when Lebeck recognises the importance 'of the dramatic action which translates them (the images) into visual

³³⁹ Taplin (SA p. 412-413) notes: 'An intriguing detail of the procession, which is involved in the same textual crux, is the red robes of 1028. (...) Assuming however that they are donned on stage (which will require one or two more extras), then there seem to be two main theories about their possible significance. One is the connection of red cloth with cult and with sacrificial processions; in that case it is more likely the attendants who wear them. The other is that red was worn by metics at the Panathenaic procession and other ceremonial occasions; in which case it should be the metic Eumenides who wear the red.'

³⁴⁰ To avoid anachronisms, we should note here that 'the Greek color vocabulary was differently arranged from our own, and seems to have been basically in terms of light and dark, bright and dark' (Taplin, *GTA*, p. 81) Thus when we refer to the color 'red' we should remember that we mean the red of *porphyra* a dark red similar to blood.

³⁴¹ LEBECK A., *The Oresteia*, p.1.

terms',³⁴² she does not discern the recurrence of the autonomous scenic objects. She concludes that ' *the most far-reaching interpretation is yielded by close verbal analysis of language and imagery combined with analysis of the ideas* ' ³⁴³. We argue that this 'far-reaching interpretation' is realised through the indicated recurrence of some special objects which re-appear on stage, taking on new meanings. To demonstrate our argument, we will follow the recurrence of the colour red as it appears on different objects and forms, throughout the course of the trilogy. 'The robe in which Clytemnestra entangles Agamemnon, which is seen after the murder and again in Cho. (see Cho. 973b), is also a sinister and bloody stuff, and its exact fabric is even more difficult to define. It is like a net of some sort (Ag 138ff, Cho997ff.) or a spider's ύφασμα (Ag. 1492); but is also a φάρος (Cho 1011) or πέπλοι. (Ag 1126, 1580, Cho1000, Eum 635) Even more tellingly Clytemnestra talks of a πλουτον εματος κακόν (Ag 1383) and Orestes remarks φόνου δέ κηκίς ζυν χρόνῳ ζυμβάλλεται / πολλές βαφάς φθείρουσα του ποικίλματος (Cho 1012f) ' ³⁴⁴ The first strong impact of the red colour comes from the famous 'carpet scene' of Agamemnon. This is a scene which has been much analysed by all the scholars who have dealt with the Oresteia.³⁴⁵ The red fabric (and not carpet as it is usually translated) is spread in front of Agamemnon forming a path which starts possibly from the centre of the stage and leads to the Skene door. This red line has a double meaning: it refers both to the river of blood which dominates the history of the house and to the power of its owners. Agamemnon's decision to walk over it has been considered as an ύβρις, preparing the audience for the later events. Though there is no such an evidence, we believe that this was the same fabric - an ornate fabric stained with blood- which Clytemnestra

³⁴² LEBECK A., *The Oresteia*, p.1.

³⁴³ LEBECK A., *The Oresteia*, p.1.

³⁴⁴ TAPLIN O., *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p.314.

³⁴⁵ See: LEBECK A., *The Oresteia*, p.74-79, TAPLIN O, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p. 310-

presents later (line 182) to the chorus, together with the dead bodies of Agamemnon and Cassandra, as she declares their murder. The third time this fabric appears on stage is after Clytemnestra's and Aegisthus's murder by Orestes in *Cho* (line 973b) Orestes reveals the same fabric once more on stage, as a proof of his father's murder, as he describes *'the stains of the blood as also the colour of its ornaments are made faint by time'*. The red colour gradually loses its intensity, signifying the gradual deconstruction of the old order. In the last tragedy the red fabric eventually breaks into units: the red robes of the chorus. This act marks the chorus's transformation from the Erinyes into the Eumenides, contributing thus to the final scene's glory where is represented the establishment of a new social order for the city of Athens. *'The trilogy's final symbolic procession represents the city of Athens to the city of Athens as the embodiment of social order; justice triumphs over the uncontrollable violence of 'revenge'*³⁴⁶. It is clear that the same solid and strong element, the fabric of the carpet scene in *Ag*, seems more faded and decomposed in Orestes' hands in *Cho*, and finally breaks up into pieces that dress the chorus in the final scene of *Eum*. *'Dyed cloth pouring to the ground, once it is associated with blood pouring to the ground, sets off a series of images of blood on the ground, which continue to their eventual embodiment and resolution in Eum'*.³⁴⁷

'There is little doubt that the indefiniteness of the nature of the purple cloth allows it to be recalled directly by the later cloth trap. Agamemnon walks over the rich tapestry - garment and into an inextricable richness of garment - net. (...) It is even possible that one and the same stage property was used for both cloths, though there

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³⁴⁶ GOLDHILL S., *The Language of Tragedy; Rhetoric and Communication*, in CCGT, p. 138.

³⁴⁷ TAPLIN O., *GTA* p. 81.

is no positive evidence for this.³⁴⁸ For us it is not so important to determine whether the same stage object was used throughout all the different scenes of the trilogy. What is important is the fact that this object is able to represent the evolution of the trilogy, in each of its major stages. We conclude that the stage properties of classical drama are not simply objects which form what we today call the 'set'. *'Some objects gather (...) special associations so that they betoken much more than themselves'*³⁴⁹ Their presence is at the same time symbolic and literal and the plot seems to emerge through their own 'history'. Their visual and verbal repetition organise the trilogy. The unique interplay between words and images is referred by Kitto, who notes: *'We have seen already how in the Oresteia, Aeschylus allies poetic imagery with stage properties; how the net cast around Troy by Zeus becomes first the net 'woven by the Erinyes' in which we see the body of Agamemnon, and then 'such a thing as a footpad might use'; how the light which the watchman is imagined to see, which Clytemnestra describes as leaping from mountain to mountain, which the chorus of the Choephoroi hails prematurely when the two murderers are killed (v. 961, παρὰ τὸ φῶς ἰδεῖν), becomes visible light only at the end of the trilogy; (...) these are moments when spectacle is working alongside speech, not as decoration, but as an additional means of expressing thought'*³⁵⁰. Verbal and spatial images are *'interwoven by associative repetition'*.

4.2.4 The different places of the *Oresteia* and their continuity throughout the trilogy

The performance of the tragedies of the *Oresteia* involves, as we have seen, at least five different places: the palace of Agamemnon, the tomb of Agamemnon, the temple

³⁴⁸ TAPLIN O, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, p.314.

³⁴⁹ TAPLIN O., *GTA*, p.77

of Apollo at Delphi, the temple of Athena Polias in Athens and the establishment of a new institutional place, the Areopagus. All those places refer to buildings or sites that were already topographically defined. The last three were sites in Athens which spectators experienced in their daily lives. Of course, we may remind ourselves that the tragedy refers to the past rather than the present of the audience. The same name of the building may refer to different structures. The temple of Athena in Athens, for example, has had different faces throughout its history. The temple of Athena of the *Eumenides* does not correspond to the same building the audience experienced in the 5th century, yet even if the building is not the same, the location as also the essential use of this building, remain the same.³⁵¹

The temple of Athena and the Areopagus not only are located in Athens but they also belong to the same general sacred site together with the theatre of Dionysus.³⁵² Those places which are part of the life of the Athenians are experienced almost simultaneously with their mythic representation during performance. The dramatic space becomes uncanny since it represents spaces which are present to the experience of contemporary Athenians. The 'real' buildings of the 5th century take on new meanings for the citizens, charged through their representations on stage. This must have been a new experience. In the case of *Eumenides* the whole second part of the tragedy is situated in Athens³⁵³. By this device the poet includes the Athenian

³⁵⁰ KITTO H.D.F., *Greek Tragedy*, 1973, p. 112, 113.

³⁵¹ The question which obviously arises here is general as it concerns all public and religious buildings: what is the importance of such a building? Is it experienced, recognized, recorded and recalled through its certain architecture or through its identification with the certain architectural type it belongs to?

³⁵² Let us not forget that the theatre of Dionysus is better understood as a space than as a building. Therefore its outline is expanded outside its physical limits, to the general site of the *polis*

³⁵³ It is interesting to compare the different representations of the *polis* of Athens, in different tragedies. The recognition of the *polis*, and its description in *Oedipus at Colonus*, is worth

audience in the plot. The fact that there is a gap in time between the action of the play and the performance becomes an intrinsic element of dramatic space. It is that all drama -and we can add this to the elements of the Greek innovation of drama- unfolds in the past. But this past is itself complex. For example, current theatre may distinguish between plays which are historical and plays which are contemporary. But in both cases the time of dramatic reference is to the past. Even a contemporary play, a play of contemporary life must be thought to represent something that is past as a condition of its representation. The term 'past' refers to the relation of the representation rather than to an order of time. A play cannot begin until it has an end. And what the play represents must be experienced as having ended, before the beginning of the play, in order for the play to exist. This becomes an important dimension in enabling Athenians to experience the city in a combined register of past and present. It does not in a modern sense lead to the historicisation of the city, but rather to an experience of the city in which past and present are inhabited.

The form of the representation of different places has to be seen through the notion of the type. In the case of places such as the palace or the tomb of Agamemnon there is no visual (or, moreover, spatial) reference for the audience, other than the ones that different representations of the myth have provided. The palace and the tomb of Agamemnon are 'unknown' as historical sites, but familiar as types of building. We believe that the poet probably aimed at the representation of the type and not of the special building. Therefore the importance is that of the representation of a palace and not of the 'specific palace' of Agamemnon. We have already argued that it is characteristic of dramatic space that it can represent a place. But this point becomes

noting. The space is gradually revealed through the speech of *Ismene* and the city of Athens obtains a new dimension in the audience's consciousness.

more radical when within the space of one play a sequence of places is represented. The reason why this is more radical is because if each play were restricted by a convention that only one place or setting could be presented it could conservatively involve the audience in the simple rule of imagining that the stage represented another but only one other space. The fundamental stability of the theatre would remain unchanged. The audience in a single stable space and the stage would become a single stable but other space. But when we deal with a scene's shift to another place (see for example *Choephoroi*) a far more complex relation with the audience is automatically *established*. A completely new experience is established - that of being in a place -the 'audience'- and experiencing places change. In a sense, this constitutes an important moment in the history of movement. Up to then, to experience a place entailed moving to it. In dramatic space, however, places move while the audience remains static. The parallel of a picture is not nearly so telling, because the place of drama involves three-dimensionality. It demonstrates the power of the dramatic space in that it can substitute one place for another within its space rather than just representing a single place. It is no longer restricted by the economy of the tableau. As we have seen in the *Oresteia* we confront a sequence of changes between different places. In *Agamemnon*, the whole tragedy takes place in front of the palace of Agamemnon. *Choephoroi* starts at the tomb of Agamemnon but then we are transferred back to the palace. At *Eumenides* we have three changes: from the temple of Apollo at Delphi, to the temple of Athena in Athens, and then to Areopagus. Aeschylus subjects his audience to an increasingly complex range of spaces. But this movement from scene to scene, from place to place, has to be achieved within a certain economy. What differentiates places on stage is the particular arrangement of certain common morphological elements (objects, shapes, colours). In this sense, the very act of

differentiation of places produces at another level a certain visual continuity, since the elements which are ranged in particular ways to suggest particular places are drawn from a common stock of objects. Thus, the trilogy presents a kind of aesthetic unity. This achievement of Aeschylus may be seen to form a parallel with his poetic technique. As many scholars have pointed out, the poet elaborates the text through a number of constantly re-appearing motifs. Wiles in his chapter about the mimetic action of the chorus notes: '*...William C. Scott has demonstrated how the repetition of metrical patterns in the Oresteia points the audience towards patterns of action and imagery. The length of the Oresteia allows the modern reader a unique glimpse of how a particular metre would evoke not only a mood but a tissue of associations.*'³⁵⁴ In just the same way, we may imagine that Aeschylus in the trilogy builds up an increasing complexity of spaces. However, the number and range of the different places which interchange during the trilogy, the metamorphosis of certain elements (the red carpet, the net of the murders, the symbolism of certain colours) helps the plot to be understood and conceived visually and spatially. It is not just a question of one place succeeding another but rather their juxtaposition and combination. In effect, he develops an elementary 'poetics' of place.

In this chapter we reached one last purpose of this thesis, which eventually was the examination of the relation of the verbal and spatial structures as they appear under the conventions of drama. The idea of a space which is possible through speech and vice versa is a fact and result of the art of drama. This special relation between the verbal and the spatial systems which organise the civic life of the polis in Athens is reflected in the organisation of the architecture and city planning. The organised space

³⁵⁴ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p.89.

of a city or a special edifice not only reflects the social structures of its time, but also an organised system of theoretical rules as they are imbedded in the histories and theories of its time.³⁵⁵ With drama we reach the unification of the verbal and the spatial, with their possibilities now summarised. And thus the space 'speaks' and the word formulates space.

³⁵⁵ WILES D., *Tragedy in Athens*, p. 21; 'Lefevre writes of the Greek polis that its' absolute space cannot be understood in terms of a collection of sites and signs; to view it thus is to misapprehend it in the most fundamental way. Rather it is indeed a space, at once indistinguishably mental and social, which comprehends the entire existence of the group concerned'

CONCLUSION

Some of the questions we initially posed as starting points of this thesis may have been answered. Others remained open. This conclusion attempts to perform various tasks: to summarise the argument but also to point to unresolved issues which are beyond the scope of the thesis proper. Our basic questions about the nature of theatrical space, theatrical speech and of the relation in between them led us to investigate the basic conventions of drama and how they may be formulated. The answers to these questions have constituted the basic framework of our analysis. But it is also the intention of this conclusion to substantiate the idea that the thesis is to a large extent formed by a contemporary architectural approach to the organisation of space. To raise this question of the architectural character of the thesis may seem somewhat paradoxical since in our discussion of the emergence of dramatic space we minimised the significance of the theatre and of the space as a fixed architectural object. But saying that the thesis draws heavily upon a contemporary architectural analysis of space is not to say that it is a work in any sense of architectural history. It is rather to say that, given our criticisms of a kind of traditionally humanist approaches to drama as text and our criticisms of the semiotic approach to drama, we have found that our approach can be related to a number of contemporary architectural analyses of space or analyses of space from within philosophy and the human sciences which have themselves made a contribution to contemporary architectural culture.³⁵⁶ Obviously, the nature of our conclusions is directly related to the way this thesis has been organised and developed. For us it was exactly this methodological approach -through the reconsideration of the context which generates

³⁵⁶See for example p.197, 198, 199, as also the work of LEFEVRE H. (1991)

theatrical space as also through the examination of its relation with word (text and performative speech)-that led us to some revealing conclusions. Of course, many former attempts to approach the form of theatrical space have been preoccupied with the examination of the rules and conventions of drama. The difference in our attempt lies on the belief that in order to make any further contribution to the subject, we had to reconsider this context and its conventions. In order to explore the originality of theatrical space and its characteristics, characteristics that we believe reflect and inform at the same time modern theories of architectural space, we had to explore further its relation with word. In this final and concluding chapter we would like to follow once more the route of the development of the thesis from chapter to chapter, summarising the conclusions of each one of them and examining their interconnection and relation with recent theories of architecture.

In the first chapter we attempted to characterise the basic types of scholarship in the field of classical drama and to present the major ways in which drama has been handled since Aristotle's *Poetics*. We argued that it is possible to divide the scholarship of the last two centuries into a number of broad categories: firstly there is the category of scholarship whose relation to the tragedies was expressed in terms of literary analysis, in which the issue of performance was marginalized. Secondly, there was a type of scholarship which, on the contrary, concentrated upon combining archaeological and other forms of historical evidence on the history of the performance of drama. Thirdly, there is an emerging contemporary form of scholarship that draws upon contemporary theoretical work (structuralism, post-structuralism, and so-called post-modern theory) or upon other disciplines (anthropology, linguistics) in order to give a much fuller account of classical drama.

Despite the invaluable contributions to the understanding of classical drama from each of the three categories we have identified, we nonetheless argued that in an important sense the innovation of drama, its features and their combination have still in some sense resisted analysis. If the Aristotelian and humanist tradition has separated the text from the performance and if the concentration upon the history of the performance and stagecraft have separated the performance from the text, we have argued in favour of two related propositions: firstly that the separated concentration upon the text, the performance, the stagecraft and at a later stage the architecture of the theatre and of the stage have, curiously, resulted in a certain failure to address the medium of drama itself. From this proposition has followed our central concern, to reconstruct the complex totality which is drama. As we mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, we have been concerned to reconstruct a *synchronic* account of Greek tragedy without assuming that what drama is, is always already known. However, in order to have a synchronic account of drama, one has to deal mainly with performance, as it is only through the meaning of performance that we can reconstruct drama as a whole. And in order to be able to analyse any of the components of drama- in our thesis the space and the speech- one has to attempt to reconstruct drama conventions and re-examine the roles of their main participants.

The second chapter provided the opportunity to reinforce our argument (about the synchronic nature of Greek drama) by establishing that classical drama was conceived as a 'whole' (by the poet), was produced as a 'whole' (during performance) and was elaborated during rehearsals through the combining relations of the group of the main participants in performance (poet, actors, chorus). Thus in this chapter we examined the contribution of the main participants in drama to the production of the

performance. One of the first important elucidations regards the role of the poet in classical drama and confirms the primary role of the performance over the text.³⁵⁷ As poet is mainly related with the production of all the elements of drama and the performance as a whole, we realise that drama is mainly identified with performance itself. A poet might conceive and elaborate simultaneously all the synthetic parts of tragedy (text, music, dance, 'set', etc.), but these are only stabilised through the teaching and during the rehearsals, in collaboration with the 'living elements' of performance: the chorus and the actors. We can see then how misleading were the interpretations given by a whole tradition which considered text as the main component of drama. The second part of this chapter concerns our attempt to understand the process through which the main factors which organize the theatre building itself arise. Thus we concluded that it was through a process of gradual differentiation among the roles of the different participants that the basic areas of dramatic performance were formed. The final composition, theatrical space itself, is constituted by the collage of all these different areas. It might seem surprising that we chose to interpret the organisation of the theatre building through the process of a gradual differentiation of drama parts and roles. But what we tried to underline is that even if this differentiation is a historical fact, what is more important is that the boundaries of the different emergent parts are- at least for the period of the acme of

³⁵⁷ We are in fact aware that the standard antithesis between text and performance is not only inadequate for our purposes but can be positively misleading. This is because the objects which we are concerned to identify belong neither to the register of text, nor of performance. If by performance is meant the actual realisation of the text in a way which perhaps corresponds to the normal relation of a musical score to its performance, then this should alert us to the limitations of the antithesis. A musical performance is thought of as a single realisation of the score. The character of the performance lies entirely in the creative skill of the performer/ conductor. This is why musical performances are the objects of judgment; they are said to be good or bad. By contrast, here we are concerned to identify the entire apparatus including the text, but including also all the other conventions which make up the production. In this sense, the term 'performance' has a more limited role; a performance is a single iteration of a production rather than the realization of a text.

classical drama- uncertain; one area ‘penetrates’ the other, different areas are interconnected, and the overall edifice is eventually unified not only through its internal structure but also with the political, religious and built environment of 5th century. It is only when theatre acquires stable boundaries either inside its main areas or with its exterior environment that its decline begins. We attempted to interpret the relevant positions and the nature of the different areas (*skene, orchestra, koilon*) in respect to the main participants of drama (actors, chorus, audience). But what became clear was that the information of the existing evidence was not enough. In order to conceive the meaning of these new roles as also the new type of space that was produced by them, we had to confront the notion of representation, a notion inherent in drama itself. The issue of representation was not confronted in its philosophical dimension. We dealt with representation in an architectural way, which means with the synthesis of all different kinds of representation in one complex entity- drama itself. It would have been impossible to reach the conclusion that drama is a set of displaced and complex systems of representation without noting the fact that this complexity is also a condition of drama at every level. Therefore it opposes the idea that drama is a kind of natural outcome of any representation of real life. Indeed it is likely the conception of real life originated in the theatre, as we have already argued throughout the thesis.

In the third chapter in order to approach the meaning of representation, we attempted to see how the basic concept of the Platonic theory of *mimesis* applies to drama. The theory of *mimesis* inevitably confronts us with the issue of reference in drama. As we have seen in our analysis, the relation is mainly to the myth and as a consequence the problem of reference in drama is much more complicated than in other forms of art.

We concluded that in the case of drama, it is not only the 'original' (where is the original?) that defines that representation but that it is also the representations which 'inform' and shape the mythical 'original'. Thus one of the main arguments of this chapter was that it was through drama that myth was formed. If mimesis is a complete theory which analyses the representation in reference to its original, we have seen that in drama this theory cannot apply, as there is not a stable 'original'. However, we did conventionally accept the term '*eidolon*' space to describe representational space and we attempted to define its form. But if the theory of *mimesis* proved to be inadequate for the understanding of drama and of the theatrical space, there is another Platonic notion of space that deserved our attention and that is the Platonic *Khora*. *Khora*'s correspondences with theatrical space are remarkable ('imprint bearer', 'receptacle', 'the space which makes room for all others to come'). We have seen that a first analogy between *Khora* and dramatic space comes from its definition as the space which 'makes room' for all other spaces to come into existence. Therefore *Khora* is not only considered as a third kind of space, but also as the 'context' through which space was generated. In correspondence with *Khora*, dramatic space was not just the theatre building or the space of the performance, but mainly the space that allowed all representations to '*come into existence*'. Through the definition of *Khora* Plato proposes what we could have called 'the disconnection of the 'representation' from the 'original''. He argued that *Khora* was the space that allowed the 'image' (representation) to be born by the 'idea' (intelligence) - in correspondence with dramatic space, which allows the representation of a place to be born by its mythical original- but then negated any further relation between the two objects. The representation might be an object completely independent of the original. On the other hand, in drama the mythical 'original' is in a constant relation with its representation

as they constantly re-form each other. Therefore both the original and its representation should not be viewed as static defined objects. Their fluid state does not allow the existence of any specific 'similarities' between them. There is no doubt that there is a kind of dependence between the two 'parts', but this dependence is not based on their external appearance but on their capacity to 'inform' each other. *Khora* introduces us also to one of the main initial questions this thesis intended to answer concerning the relation between the articulated 'speech' and the place from where this speech is articulated. We noted that what was formulated in *Timaeus* about this issue was in accordance with what we believe about drama: the word is validated only through the identity of the subject of articulation but the subject itself is identified with the place where it belongs. In this sense, the word is integrally connected with the place from which it is articulated. These final remarks about the relation between word and space introduced the next chapter. In order to explore further the relation between space and speech in classical drama we had first to deal with the meaning and the structure of dramatic speech in itself.

The issues which were raised by the fourth chapter were difficult for an architect to approach. We attempted to see how the structure of the text corresponds to that of the space. Speech becomes eventually the starting point in order to go back to the spatial representation. This last chapter included two parts. In the first one we presented the form of the tragic text as a new kind of performative text based on two important parameters: the use of writing and the introduction of the dialogue. We first approached the issue through the presentation of the structure of tragedy according to Aristotle. As we have seen, the main segregation of the structure of tragedy he proposed was that between the choral parts and the dialogical parts. It has been argued

by various scholars that what differentiates drama from any other performance genre before is the introduction of dialogue. We argued that since the status of dialogue in drama is quite different than that in everyday life, what eventually differentiates drama from other types of performances is not dialogue as such, but the nature of dramatic speech in general. In this sense all dramatic speech is 'dialogic' and able to produce space during performance in any of its forms (dialogue, monologue, direct, indirect). Dramatic speech, even in the form of an apparently 'descriptive' monologue, never 'describes' but always acts. What is important for us is that this action produces three-dimensional space on stage and it is in this sense that we have called dramatic speech, three-dimensional speech.³⁵⁸ Thus we re-named dramatic speech three-dimensional speech, in our attempt to investigate its special relation with dramatic space under the conventions and rules of tragedy. It is now clear to us that the definition of dramatic space is also inadequate without parallel application of dramatic dialogical speech, three-dimensional speech. We have seen how two different systems, the verbal and the spatial, interact in drama in a way quite different from our assumptions about everyday life.

In the second part of this chapter we explored the relations between the language of tragedy, the represented action and the organised space, taking as a basis for our discussion the three tragedies of the *Oresteia*: *Agamemnon*, *Choephoroi*, *Eumenides*.

The analysis of the examples of the tragedies is based partially on definite assumptions. But these are assumptions which are based on the conclusions we

³⁵⁸ The language of tragedy is always 'double'. At a simple level we might express this in the following formula: what is said on stage, or rather the meaning of what is said, is heard. Indeed the audience heard it. But the audience always hears a second element which is what we might call the significance of what is said. This significance relates the utterance of the speaker to the context of the play. From our point of view this question of significance is always materially tied to the existence and function of the audience. The question then is how

arrived at by analysing one by one the main conventions concerning the space and the speech of drama. It was difficult to isolate only a few of the fascinating examples the *Oresteia* provides without the risk of getting involved in areas that we had not intended to deal with (classical literature), even though for the purposes of our research we had already encountered the existing scholarship on the general subject of the performance in antiquity in the first chapter. But it was in the fourth chapter that in many cases the difference of our conclusions from those of orthodox scholarship was obvious. The first of the tragedies, the *Agamemnon* gave the opportunity to argue that the space the audience conceived as composing what was seen and what was heard on stage was different from what we might have called 'the set', the built representation of a place. For us, the representation of the palace of Agamemnon cannot be identified only with the Skene building, since its representation is also achieved by the speech of the different characters, and it can only be perceived as the summation of its different moments in time, deployed by the speech of the different characters. In this sense, we realised why the 'palace' of the performance belongs to the order of the narrative rather than to the being of a real building. To accept the latter is to collapse back into the 'naturalistic fallacy' in which the palace is an object offered to visual perception and stands as a representation of a 'real' object. This indeed may be a relationship in naturalistic drama, but is not that of Greek dramatic discourse. Eventually we concluded that any place represented on stage has a particular relation with temporality. It does not refer to a specific historical moment, just because it does not refer to a specific moment in time and place, but is rather the emblem of a place, which is only made temporally further defined in terms of time by speech. In terms of our argument, this leads to what appeared as, but is not really, a

this language is related to what is represented on stage.

paradox. On the one hand, objects and scenery do involve specific temporal forms of existence, but this is lent to the scenery not through their visual representation but by the dimension of speech. A difficulty in understanding this comes from an over acquaintance with naturalistic drama, which is organised differently and which does not go through the mechanisms of the emblem. In many cases we had to question the conclusions of the existing scholarship. We have opposed the widely expressed view that the audience is conveyed through its imagination to 'other' places, outside the stage, or behind the Skene building. We have tried to argue that the audience of Greek drama is an audience of a special kind constituted by and conversant with specific conventions. It never uses its imagination to be conveyed 'elsewhere', as if 'elsewhere' was simply a space imagined by the audience. For the 'elsewhere' is already represented on stage even though this may take a verbal rather than a visual form. It is here that our critique of the distinction between direct and indirect speech finds a role. The idea of 'elsewhere' is closely linked to the idea of indirect speech, since we have tried to show that within dramatic discourse there is no such thing as indirect speech and that in some way everything becomes located on the stage. Indeed we might say as a paradox that only the stage is able to represent the 'elsewhere'. The idea that dramatic space was not understood as a static set, but as a narrative vehicle, the collage of the different events of a place's history as deployed by the speech of the characters, is close to the modern idea of montage space³⁵⁹: what constitutes space's final image is the projection of the multiple superposition of its different moments in time. Thus space is conceived more as a narrative vehicle than as a stable construction.

³⁵⁹ See VIDLER A.'s chapter: *The Explosion of space, Architecture and the filmic imagery, in Warped space*

The *Choephoroi* gave the opportunity to explore further the nature of dramatic space as montage space. We have seen that during the whole of the tragedy there were simultaneously represented on stage more than one place (for example the tomb of Agamemnon together with the palace of Agamemnon). Each one of them was 'activated' depending upon the evolution of the play. Speech allowed a place to 'come into existence' even if its representation was there, in front of the audience, long before or after the relevant scene. Another issue this tragedy gave us the opportunity to discuss was the relation of the characters with the places where they 'belong'. In our case the identification between the dead Agamemnon and the place he 'belongs' (tomb) was absolute. It was only through addressing the tomb that Agamemnon was addressed. The tomb's representation on stage was another subject for speculation. Since the tomb is already a representation in everyday life, the tomb's representation on stage is the representation of a representation. The tomb was not interpreted as a boundary between two places³⁶⁰ but as the representation of the 'unseen'. We thus concluded again that the theatre building 'includes' spaces (the elsewhere, Hades) which even if they are 'unseen' exist dramatically on stage participating in the evolution of the action. In the last of the tragedies, the *Eumenides*, a new type of representational space, the space of the dream of the chorus, leads us to speculate further about the nature of dramatic space. The innovation here consists in the fact that the audience confronts together the space of the dream -from which Clytemnestra's *eidolon* speaks- and the subjects of the dream (chorus). In this case we are dealing not only with the co-existence of but also with the communication between two apparently completely different types of space ('reality' and 'dream')

³⁶⁰ If the Skene facade can be considered as the boundary between the outside and the inside of the palace, the seen and the unseen action, tomb does not imply a space below it. The tomb is a different kind of representation in the sense that it represents the space which exist 'elsewhere' outside our direct perception, but still included in the action.

both 'represented' on stage through the characters who inhabit them. We also dealt with the meaning of the 'gradual formulation' of the chorus - as an 'element' which is conceived by the audience before their appearance on stage and it is totally transformed by the end of the tragedy from Furies into Eumenides. The last part of this analysis concerned the reading of the evolution of the trilogy through the re-appearance of certain motifs and elements which constitute the visual vocabulary of the performance. We have seen how the narrative was deployed not only through the articulated speech or the action on stage but also through the recurrence of the same elements into the course of the trilogy (see the example of the red fabric). We examined the different forms dramatic space takes during the evolution of the *Oresteia* trilogy and we have seen that just as the text was organised by the repetition of the same metrical patterns, the constant re-organisation of the same synthetic elements-objects formed the representations of the different places throughout the trilogy, thus completing a visual continuity between the three tragedies.

As we have already said in the introduction to this thesis, the central reason why architectural theory in a broad sense has been essential to the construction of these arguments is that it itself has itself increasingly focused upon the analysis of space. By the analysis of space we do not mean here anything which could be construed as the task of the natural sciences. As we mentioned before (see p. 3, footnote 2) since Kant there has been a theoretical need to supplement any physical account of space or geometrical analysis of space with a subjective theory of space, that is, an analysis of the subject's relation to spatial organisation. This might take the form of the effects of architectural space upon a subject. But there has been an increasing recognition that those effects have to be supplemented by the way in which cultural and institutional

arrangements intervene as subjective effects upon the subject. The 'rise of space' in architectural theory and history starts in the nineteenth century and as Vidler argues in his recent book³⁶¹ ' *Perhaps the foremost exponent of spatial architecture was August Schmarsow, (...), who posited that space, and architectural space in particular, was an active bodily creation and perception.* ' This idea continued within the modernist tradition (see Giedion's *Space, Time and Architecture* 1941) to find its expression within contemporary digital culture, upsetting the ' *Albertian/ Cartesian/ Kantian paradigms of space and representational techniques by psychoanalysis, placing the onus of sight not on the technique but on the observer...* ' ³⁶²

Considerable interest has been developed within architectural theory in the work of M. Foucault. Although Foucault never formulated an analytic of space, it is clear that in his work, he developed a series of concerns, which displayed the historian's usual conviction that in representing history, one is ultimately repressing relations of time. By contrast Foucault was concerned in his historical works more with regimes of spatiality and practices of spatialisation. Most obviously in the text *Discipline and Punish* (1975) Foucault related the history of punishment in terms of transformations of regimes of spatialisations. His account of the transformation of punishment from between the 'ancient regime' and the 19th century is all analysed in terms of the spatiality of punishment and its localisation in the body of the subject. The texts *Madness and Civilisation* (1961), *The Birth of the Clinic* (1963) and even *The History of Sexuality* (1976) can also be seen as exhibiting an acute sensibility in respect of the issue of the spatial construction of subjectivity. Even the apparently abstract text *Words and Things* with its account of transitions in the history of ideas and its attempt

³⁶¹ VIDLER A., *Warped Space, Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture*.

³⁶² VIDLER A., *Warped Space, Art, Architecture, and Anxiety in Modern Culture*, p. 8

to grasp the successive underlined structures which he calls the '*episteme*' can be seen as an attempt to view the history of ideas according to the way in which words, concepts and things were spatially distributed in relation to each other. His work has enabled architectural theories to consider the ways in which architecture programme conditioned a certain subjectivity and at the same time how architecture was determined by spatial strategies.

The second major source for architectural theory in its analysis of space has obviously been in the philosophy of J. Derrida. Derrida has had a strong influence on architectural theory and its concern with space. From the beginning of his philosophical career with the publication of his introduction to Husserl's text on the origin of geometry (*The Origin of Geometry*), Derrida has been concerned with the conditions of spacing, inerrability and reiteration. This has expressed itself in a lengthy meditation on what he finds to be '*the paradoxes of the way in which speech and writing are opposed to each other*'. But this has also led him into issues which might be placed under the category of representation, without going into the issues of deconstruction as a straightforward design issue which led in the eighties to the project of a deconstructive architecture. The third area in which architectural theory has been relevant is in the general field of the analysis of the use of space. This can be seen in reflections on modernist architecture itself. The modernist slogan of 'form follows function' obviously required architects and architectural theories to try to find ways of analysing the function of a space more precisely and indeed to speculate more rigorously on what they thought was a function. Various branches of investigation float from these modernist concerns, some increasingly practical, such as the analysis of circulation, programme, and use, some more theoretical and more critical of the

issue function.

Finally, we would like to refer to the analysis of space as 'event', as seen and developed by the architect B. Tschumi. Tschumi underlines the importance of spatialisation that goes with the event, subverting the idea that architecture is a stable field of fixed structures. Architecture is defined by the combination of three major parameters - space, action and movement- and it is this heterogeneity that '*makes architecture that event, that place of shock, or that place of the invention of ourselves*'³⁶³. Thus architecture should cease to separate the different categories it is made of, and '*should merge them into unprecedented combinations of programs and spaces*'. To substantiate his interpretation of architectural space and in order to define the term event, as '*the moment of erosion, collapse, of the very assumptions of the setting within which a drama takes place...*'³⁶⁴, Tschumi has often referred to the theories of both Foucault and Derrida. Thus 'event architecture' is seen more as a '*turning point than an origin or an end. (as opposed to propositions such as form follows function)*'. The idea that what traditionally has been referred to as fixed should now be conceived as open, uncertain in its limits and fragmented, relates architecture to the nature of the space of drama at least under the perception this thesis attempted to open.

All of the above cases defined the context of speculation on the modern theories of architecture and helped the formulation of its basic questions. The complexities of

³⁶³ TSCHUMI B., *Event Architecture*, in *Architecture in transition, between Deconstruction and New Modernism*, ed. NOEVER P., p. 125.

³⁶⁴ TSCHUMI B., *Event Architecture*, in *Architecture in transition, between Deconstruction and New Modernism*, ed. NOEVER P., p. 127.

architectural space's relation with its representation especially since the emergence of digital or virtual space, the ways in which memory and imagination are projected on to a place informing our conception, the constant investigation of space's relation with language and word, and the conception of architecture more as an open landscape than as a built object, are only some of the contemporary issues which find correspondences to some of the pages of this thesis. Our attempt to relate these questions with the conclusions of our analysis of the theatrical space of classical drama might seem at first paradoxical. What should be clear is that this is not an attempt to 'answer' these questions by referring to the space of drama. We simply argue that such an analysis is important not only for the classicist, the archaeologist, or the theatre practitioner but also for today's architect in the sense that it deals with contemporary questions about space's relation with its representation, with time, or with the inhabited body and the event that it produces, issues already confronted, as we have seen, through the conventions of drama in fifth century Athens' culture. As we are used to the idea that these questions find their origin in the development of the recent (post-Renaissance) history and historiography of architecture, it was revealing for us to indicate that it is also possible to inform them in reference to a 'complete' and innovative system of antiquity; classical drama.

Abbreviations

- AO*, **CONACHER D. J.**, *Aeschylus' Oresteia*, University of Toronto Press, 1987
- BT*, **NIETZSCHE F.**, *Birth of Tragedy*, 1872
- CCGD*, **EASTERLING P.E.**, *The Cambridge Companion to Greek Tragedy*,
Cambridge University Press, 1997
- DFA*, **PICKARD - CAMBRIDGE**, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens*, Claredon
Press, 1968
- IGT*, **SEGAL CH.**, *Interpreting Greek Tragedy, Myth, Poetry, Text*, Cornell
University Press, 1986
- NDD*, **WINKLER J.J. and ZEITLIN FR.**, (eds), *Nothing to do with Dionysos?*
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- SA*, **TAPLIN O.**, *The Stagecraft of Aeschylus*, Oxford University Press, 1977
- TA*, **WILES D.**, *Tragedy in Athens*, Cambridge University Press, 1997
- TSHP*, **EDMUNDS L.**, *Theatrical space and Historical place in Sophocles' Oedipus
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